ॐ

Point out the "Way"—however dimly,
and lost among the host—as does the evening
star to those who tread their path in darkness.
—*The Voice of the Silence*

THE ARYAN PATH

VOL. X AUGUST 1939 No. 8

THE WAY OUT

Henry A. Wallace, United States Secretary for the Department of Agriculture, in a paper on "Racial Theories and the Genetic Basis for Democracy", says :—

When a political system fails to give large numbers of men the freedom it has promised, then they are willing to hand over their destiny to another political system. When the existing machinery of peace fails to give them any hope of national prosperity or national dignity, they are ready to try the hazard of war. When education fails to teach them the true nature of things, they will believe fantastic tales of devils and magic. When their normal life fails to give them anything but monotony and drabness they are easily led to express themselves in unhealthy or cruel ways, as by mob violence. And when science fails to furnish effective leadership, men will exalt demagogues, and science will have to bow down to them or keep silent.

This is a very graphic description of what is happening all over the world to-day. The systems of government which have been slowly evolved during the centuries have failed sadly in their purpose, and to-day we are faced with new concepts of government which in practice have brought about the virtual collapse of International Law and the violation of all the decent standards of public morality.

The chaos in which men and nations to-day find themselves groping has unsettled the European mind till it starts at its own shadow. Fear and its grim and inseparable companion, Hatred, hold almost undisputed sway. The situation is only too obvious, but it is necessary to understand how it has come about and how it can be remedied.

Evil has been gathering force in Europe for many centuries. It scored a great victory twenty years ago at Versailles. That a gigantic tactical blunder was made at that time is generally recognized, but that blunder is less generally traced to its root in the spirit of narrow separateness and of vindictiveness which was a negation of human

brotherhood and which sprang from the decline of faith in the eternal verities of life.

The same root has put forth other shoots of evil since Versailles; they have flowered in Abyssinia, in Spain, in China, in Czechoslovakia and in Albania. Men who deplore violence and who love the right have raised an ineffective outcry against the flowers of evil omen, but they have for the most part stood by passively while the advocates of "preparedness", with enthusiastic support from the armament makers, have watered the giant root with their clamour for larger armies, stronger navies, increased air forces and vaster stores of the implements of destruction.

The smoke of battle inevitably rises, soon or late, from the twin fires of fear and hatred roused into active expression; idle armaments represent their potential force which may at any moment be transformed into catastrophic energy. The increasing of armaments brings no corresponding increase in security; rather it lays the train of combustibles ready for any falling spark to ignite. And, if war comes, as come it must and will unless the present attitude of men and nations changes, it will produce no more security for the victors than for the vanquished. The last war did not produce security for any nation. No war ever will.

The present policy may perhaps avert war for a period, but it cannot do so for long. External applications may for a time hold in abeyance the outward manifestation of an organic disease, but no amount of poulticing and fomentations will eradicate a deep-seated ailment, which demands a fundamental inner readjustment. The gigantic armaments of the present day are the very type of the white elephant, the upkeep of which brings to ruin the object of the royal favour. Beating swords into ploughshares is admittedly child's play compared with turning super-dreadnoughts and tanks to any useful purpose, but they might better be scrapped altogether than that their possession should plunge the world into the threatening sea of red disaster.

If the tree of evil, now in vigorous bloom, is allowed to come to full fruition, the result will not be a war as the world has known war—unspeakably dreadful as war has increasingly become. No, what the world has to look forward to, unless the root of evil is effectively attacked, is the precipitation on a continental scale of a *Terreur* worse than that which shook France to its foundations at the close of the eighteenth century, a *Terreur* which Madame Blavatsky has prophesied will, when it comes, affect the whole of Europe.

Fortunately, that drastic *dénouement* is not inevitable. According to the ancient Indian doctrine of *Avataras,* the race-mind is stirred when *adharma* (unrighteousness) waxes strong. There is enough good in the unsophisticated common people to save the world if that good can be brought into expression. The very force of the prevailing evil draws forth that innate righteousness. The force of goodwill exists in the masses of Germany and Italy and Russia, as it does in the masses of Britain, of France and of Poland, but the people in the former states have voluntarily

assumed bonds which hamper the expression of their will to good. And alas, even in the democratic countries, in whom therefore lies the world's chief hope, no leader has so far arisen who is capable of organizing the popular goodwill and directing it to effective expression. In fact, the complaisance of Britain and of France at Munich definitely weakened the democracies and strengthened the hands of the dictators. Also, many forces within the so-called democracies are arrayed against peace : sectarian institutions, local patriotisms, the sense of national or racial or religious superiority.

There are many chapters in the histories of the democracies, especially in their imperialistic phase, which need to be reopened, and even justice must be substituted for the right of might. There can be no lasting peace for the world till justice is done on every continent. The demand for justice for all will not become effective, however, until the futility of the effort to overcome hatred by hatred is recognized, until the perception awakens that all men are brothers and that the good of the human race comes before the good of the French Nation or of the British Empire.

Outside the circle of evil around which European nations are racing like mice in a cage is the freedom of Peace. Any sane nation which knows the password—Human Brotherhood—can break through, can awaken from the nightmare in which all are struggling. How are the European peoples to learn that password, to kindle in themselves such a zeal for justice that it will burn up the tree of evil, root and branch ? Where are they to find the altruism that will make natural and inevitable the practice of Universal Brotherhood ? Where but in the revival of enlightened Faith which has languished since Christendom rejected Jesus and accepted the church—denominations matter not—with its whitewashing of war and its countless other moral casuistries ?

The West can rediscover that true Faith if it repudiates Churchianity and accepts as its guide in life the Sermon on the Mount, as found in the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, and the Thirteenth chapter of St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians.

In the article which follows Mr. Claude Houghton shows how European civilization should return to a truer faith, abandoning the false gods it has so long worshipped.

FAITH IN THE FUTURE

Probably nothing reveals a man more clearly than his conception of the familiar. If we knew no more about him than this, we should know much. We should know the " givens " of his thought—the background of his mind. We should know what he regards as natural, normal and inevitable.

This is as true of an age as it is of a man, and it may be instructive therefore to remember certain possibilities which are familiar to-day.

That civilization may be destroyed in the cataclysm of war ; that Red revolution may engulf the world ; that the present economic structure may collapse into shapeless ruin—all these have become familiar possibilities. They have ceased to be the spectral projections of a nightmare. They no longer seem as remote from actuality as a row of grinning gargoyles. We are accustomed to them. What was once fantastic has become familiar.

The fact that, even a few years ago, these possibilities would have been regarded as delirium by most people is an indication of the road we have travelled, and the rapidity of our descent. It is so dramatic an indication that it would be only too easy to contend that, although collective security has failed, collective insanity has achieved a spectacular success.

What we have to consider here, however, is the effects of the fact that a nightmare has become the normal.

The first, and the greatest, effect is that faith in the future has been destroyed. Once, men instinctively assumed that many of their institutions were permanent. There were certainties in those days. Most people unquestioningly believed in Progress ; in the divine right of Property ; in the sweet simplicity of three per cent ; in a future which would preserve the essential structure of the present. Evolution, not revolution, was their confident creed. Things would change—of course they would change—but only as a result of a broadening from precedent to precedent. In fundamentals, the lives of their children would resemble their own. And, for fortune's favourites, old age would be a leisurely last look round at a world which, on the whole, was a very tolerable affair.

One by one these certainties, and many others, have vanished. The future is no longer a map ; it is a vast question-mark. Nothing could illustrate more poignantly the present state of Europe than the fact that, if peace could be assured even for a year, there would be an instant boom on the Stock Exchange. Yesterday's Despair is to-day's Hope. Values alter—when one is living from hand to mouth. A dead rat is treasure trove to a starving man. " The art of our necessities is strange, that can make vile things precious."

A nation might be defined as a faith in the future, for clearly its countless activities are based on the instinctive assumption that they will continue to have relevance to its

hopes, traditions and ideals. Undermine that instinctive assumption, and life becomes meaningless. To what end should one labour, plan, have children? If the world is going to revert to the jungle, only gorillas should worry about a declining birth-rate.

Destroy faith in the future, and a nation ceases to be a nation. It degenerates into a mob—a mob of fear-hunted individuals—for whom the past is a dream and the future an abyss.

Nowadays it is a truism to say that "Recovery depends on a return of confidence". Actually, of course, the phrase implies that the psychological war now raging in Europe has destroyed faith in the future of trade. Lacking stable conditions, enterprise is paralysed. It is not that men have suddenly lost the initiative which accepts normal risks, but they shrink from taking risks of a totally new order. They shrink from *unimaginable* risks. Consequently, no one knows what to do. There are no "givens", no certainties. To-day, it is not "lean-look'd prophets who whisper fearful change". It's every other intelligent man you meet. Inevitably, therefore, fear grips the modern world like an iron frost.

It is fear which has destroyed faith in the future. It is fear which is piling monstrous armaments heavens-high. It is fear which is dehumanizing men. Nothing could be more paradoxical, more pathetic and more revealing than the fact that only in frenzied preparation for war can men glimpse the ghost of Security. We've got to that. Fear is working overtime to create confidence—to ensure a future which, at any rate, will be *recognizable*.

Inevitably, therefore, the secret dread in the hearts of many men is that evil is mighty—and that it will prevail. Everywhere evil seems to be establishing its ascendancy. Everywhere, it seems to trample underfoot everything which denies its supremacy. Its shadow lengthens and deepens over the world. More and more arrogantly it claims that it, and it alone, is Reality. And, as ever, it points to appearances to justify that claim.

The essential, therefore—unless the world is to go down into a welter of destruction—is to *repudiate evil's claim to be reality. To repudiate it instantly and finally, for to accept it, even for a moment, is dangerous.* Once you have sunk your knees and bowed your head, you no longer see what you are worshipping.

It is no new issue which confronts the modern world. It is an old issue —presented in gigantic terms. Evil has mobilized on a scale unprecedented, and is claiming allegiance—on a scale unprecedented. So imposing is its grim array that, to many, there seems no alternative to instant and abject surrender.

One result is that there are two kinds of suffering in the world to-day. There is physical suffering, to an unrealizable extent: and there is spiritual anguish, caused by the dread that everything which denies the omnipotence of evil is no more than a fading dream. This, perhaps, is the reason why all men in whom decency has survived recoil from the possibility of world war. They recoil because they

realize that *victory—no matter on whose banners it lights—will be victory for evil, and only for evil.*

Nevertheless, in a strict sense, there can be no permanent victory for evil. There can be none because evil contains a self-destructive principle. To ally oneself with evil, therefore, is to become subject to the operation of that principle. No matter what the appearance may be—no matter how universal or how overwhelming its triumphs may seem—evil is essentially self-destructive and, paradoxically, it has power only over itself.

Swedenborg's definition of the power of evil still stands. " The evil can do evil, to the evil—only through their evil." It is of the nature of evil endlessly to commit suicide.

It would seem, therefore, that faith in the future will revive if—and only if—men resolutely refuse to be duped by evil's claim to omnipotence. Again, the issue is an old one. Judge by appearances, and evil will seem the sole reality. Judge with a righteous judgment, and it will be revealed as a lie—and the father of them. It may well be that *if we have lost faith in the future, it is because we have served the false—and are now confronted by the unmasked features of the god we have worshipped in deed, not the one we have praised with our lips.*

It is an occult doctrine that evil must be made manifest in order to be recognised for what it is ; and in order to be cast off. Lacking manifestation, evil's essential nature remains hidden—with the result that it can masquerade in many forms seductive to our pride, our apathy, or our self-satisfaction. It may even deck itself with the trappings of 'religion'. But, once evil is made manifest—especially on the scale on which it is manifested to-day—it is impossible not to recognize it for what it is. And, by attaining form, evil automatically becomes subject to the operation of its own inherent principle of self-destruction.

It is no new issue, therefore, which challenges mankind to-day. What is new is that the nature of the issue is apparent to all.

We may take comfort from the knowledge that when faith in the future arises in our hearts—and it will arise—it will not be that former vacillating faith which quailed before all that denied it. It will have survived ordeal by fire. It will have emerged triumphant from great tribulation.

Sooner or later faith has to descend into hell. It has to encounter the absence of God. It has to discover that God is revealed as fully by His absence as He is by His presence.

Faith is not faith till it has survived crucifixion.

CLAUDE HOUGHTON

GOVERNMENT AND PERSONAL LIBERTY

[Every Indian, politician, reformer, educationist will find this article by the well-known American historian, **James Truslow Adams,** useful. It has a very practical message for India. Our esteemed contributor emphasises the fact, often brought out in these pages, that our civilization is sorely in need of intellectual freedom. He refers to peoples' dependence on science which certainly is becoming a source of intellectual slavery, for that dependence is blind. Because of their mental laziness people seem to prefer being ordered about by men of science, political dictators or religious popes instead of thinking for themselves, using their rights as citizens, enjoying their soul freedom. It is said that men get the government they deserve ; that certainly is the view in the East where Karma is accepted.—EDS.]

To-day, in the Western world at least, there are two totally contrasted theories of the relation of the individual to the state. In the dictator-totalitarian countries the theory held is that the individual exists only in and for the state ; whereas in the free or democratic countries the theory is that the state exists only for the benefit of the individual. The implications and effects of these theories are at complete variance. In the first the theory leads to the entire control of the private lives of all citizens by the man or group of men who control the government. There is no such thing as personal liberty if the controlling power decides otherwise. In the second the government is bound not to infringe on certain liberties which the citizens have decided are fundamental. In the one we hear the voice of the dictator ; in the other the voice of the people. In this article we are concerned with the question of liberty, but we may note that the presence or absence of liberty may profoundly affect international relations. In the past few years I have lived in or visited thirteen European countries and I receive frequent reports from many of them. It is my profound conviction that the peoples of all of them have a horror and a deep dread of war. Yet Europe is an armed camp living in fear. That fear is of those countries in which, because of destruction of personal liberties, the voice of the people cannot make itself heard. Among the free nations there is no fear of each other, and none of the free nations have engaged in war against one another for over a hundred years. Liberty is thus both a personal and a world question.

How are these personal liberties known and safeguarded ? Largely in the form of what we call Bills of Rights, which define what rights the citizens have as against the government. England, which has the longest history as a free nation, is said to have an unwritten constitution, but even in England most of the personal liberties enjoyed are framed in documents from Magna Carta down. Newer nations or those which have altered their forms of government by revolution or otherwise have perforce had to draw up written constitutions covering the entire form of government.

The oldest of these, that of the United States, was drawn up in 1787 and adopted in 1788 with the under-

standing that a Bill of Rights in the form of amendments would be added ; this was done in 1791. The colonists had for a century and a half been, perhaps, the freest people on earth, but they had gradually suffered infringements by the British government on what they believed to be the rights of free men, and the list of rights which they added to their constitution, so that their own government could never infringe them, was largely a result of their practical experience. Most of the individual States had already embodied such Bills in their own local constitutions, but with the Federal form of government there was a fear, justified as has been shown many times, that the central government, though deriving its powers from the people, might try to over-ride the personal freedom of its citizens. On many important occasions it has been shown that the ultimate protection of the individual in his freedom has been the Bill of Rights in the Federal constitution, as interpreted and upheld by the Supreme Court.

The first article of the Bill sets forth what we still consider as fundamental rights, without which a people cannot be free nor a free government carried on. They are that :—

> Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof ; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press ; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

We believe that *there cannot be liberty unless men are free to worship, speak, print, and criticize the government, as they choose.* In the Bill there are certain other more specific guarantees which are of great importance, such as :—

> No soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house without the consent of the owner, nor in war time but in a manner prescribed by law... The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated...No person shall be held to answer for a capital or other infamous crime unless on a presentment or indictment by a grand jury...Nor be deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law ; nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation...The accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury...Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Thus did a free people, who had just gone through a long war to gain their independence, protect themselves against the possibility of oppression by the popular government which they were themselves erecting. The constitution, including these clauses, is the fundamental law of the land. The government consists of three branches, the Executive, Legislative and Judiciary, but to the last belongs the duty of deciding whether any executive act or legislation contravenes the constitution. This explains why, although occasionally objecting to some specific decision by the Courts, the people as a whole have consistently insisted on the absolute political independence and high moral character of the Supreme Court, and why the nation offered such violent opposition to President Roosevelt's

plan to pack the Court by increasing its membership.

Nearly a century and a half has passed since the adoption of the Bill of Rights. America has grown from a population of about 4,000,000 to 130,000,000, embracing almost all the races and religions of the world, all living in harmony. *What has protected us and given us the incentive to go ahead has been the Bill of Rights which guarantees us in the unmolested possession of our persons and property, and gives us the right to worship, think, speak and print as we choose.* These guarantees have made free men and free minds. As we look to-day at such states as Italy, Germany and Russia, in which personal liberty has been crushed out, we realize that, although for the time being they may have powerful military machines, *no nation can remain powerful or great in which there is no spiritual freedom or opportunity for the growth of thought and personality.* The world has always needed the life of the spirit, but because of the nature of modern civilization and its dependence, for good or ill, on science, never before did it so need intellectual freedom. There can be no advance or even stability for a nation of robots driven this way or that at the whim of one man without scope of their own for personal initiative.

We have, however, to consider another aspect of the matter. We have spoken of constitutions, Bills of Rights and the protection of the courts. These, however, are not in themselves sufficient. Conditions alter, and *a constitution must be a living thing.* In one way and another, by legal interpretation, by amendment or usage, it must grow with the people it serves. If it becomes rigid, then the maladjustment between it and the needs of the nation will sooner or later result in a violent revolution instead of in normal growth. We must also remember that peoples differ vastly in their natures, desires and capacities. Some, like the English, have the innate qualities of love of tradition, of compromise, of self-government and of abhorrence of surrendering themselves to the government of one man. Others who perhaps lack these have other qualities. There are some nations who have adopted constitutions but have been unable to work them, either because of circumstances or their own natures. Thus after the World War Germany had a democratic constitution, but now has a Hitler. The South American countries, which are ruled by dictators of one sort and another, all have paper constitutions which nominally provide for a Republican form of government. Had the American or the Canadian Constitutions been adopted a century ago by the South American nations, it does not follow that they would be operating to-day in the southern continent as they do in the two countries of the north.

A constitution is what men make of it. Perhaps President Wilson, both in Mexico and in Europe, made no greater mistake than to believe that the same institutions would function in the same way among all peoples. A turtle cannot wear the crocodile's hide nor the crocodile the turtle's shell. A constitution is not a piece

of paper or a set of rules which can be clamped down on any and every people. In its broadest and real sense it is the natural integument of government which grows out of the natures of the peoples themselves.

Thus also with Bills of Rights and personal liberties. What will serve as guarantees among peoples with a given set of individual and political characteristics will be useless among others. Moreover, the liberties actually desired may vary. To some it would be intolerable not to be able to worship, think and speak as they wished. As the long history of martyrs in thought and religion indicates, they would suffer any torture rather than give up these liberties. To others, on the other hand, they might mean little or nothing. In the late Roman Empire men could be governed with bread and circuses, and even in the great Western democracies of to-day *there is some evidence among the masses that they care more about so called "security" than about liberty.* I do not believe this is yet true of the citizens as a whole, but it is a tendency which must be fought against by those who still prize freedom above all else. It must also be remembered that just as there may be nations at all stages of genuine cultural development, regardless of apparent surface resemblances, so within each nation there are layers of classes at different stages of development.

In considering the problem of India under a new form of government with regard to personal liberty and its preservation, it would be impertinent for me to make specific suggestions. What I would point out is that it would be essential, first, to decide what personal liberties the people consider as necessary for the spiritual, intellectual, political and economic development which they envisage as desirable ; and, second, in attempting to safeguard these liberties they would have to take into consideration the nature, adaptability and sympathy of the people at large for the practical operation of any form of constitution. In my own country, should the people come to care more for being governed than for governing themselves, more for selfishness and ease than freedom, then neither constitution nor courts could save us from ourselves. It is true not only that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty" but also that no form of government makes greater demands, morally and intellectually, on its citizens of all classes than does a self-governing democracy. Government cannot be based on a theory or a text. It must be based on the hearts, the wills, the minds and the character of the nation.

JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS

THE SCIENCE OF THE FIVE FIRES

[Nolini Kanta Gupta is a well-known Bengali essayist and is the author of *The Coming Race, Towards the Light* and *Yoga of Sri Aurobindo.*

For the student of the Esoteric Philosophy of Theosophy this very rough sketch of the Cycle of Birth—the descent of the soul into the body—will prove of great interest if read in conjunction with those passages in W. Q. Judge's *Ocean of Theosophy* (1893) which deal with "the actual physical processes which have to be undergone by the Ego in passing from the unembodied to the embodied state" and "the roads, ways or means of descent from the invisible to the visible plane". He adds :—"As we know that no human body is formed without the union of the sexes, and that the germs of such production are locked up in the sexes and must come from food which is taken into the body, it is obvious that foods have something to do with the reïncarnating of the Ego. Now if the road to reïncarnation leads through certain food and none other, it may be possible that if the Ego gets entangled in food which will not lead to the germ of physical reproduction, a punishment is indicated where Manu says that such and such practices will lead to transmigration, which is then a 'hindrance'."—Eds.]

The Science of the Five Agnis (Fires), as propounded by Pravahan, explains and illustrates the process of the birth of the body, the passage of the soul into earth existence. It describes the advent of the child, the building of the physical form of the human being. The process is conceived of as a sacrifice, the usual symbol with the Vedic Rishis for the expression of their vision and perception of universal processes of Nature, physical and psychological. Here, the child is said to be the final fruit of the sacrifice, the different stages in the process being : (1) Soma, (2) Rain, (3) Food, (4) Semen, (5) Child. Soma means Rasa—physically the principle of water, psychologically the principle of delight—and symbolises and constitutes the very soul and substance of life. Now it is said that these five principles—the fundamental and constituent elements —are born out of the sacrifice, through the oblation or offering to the five Agnis. The first Agni is Heaven or the Sky-God, and by offering to it one's faith and one's ardent desire, one calls into manifestation Soma or Rasa or Water, the basic principle of life. This water is next offered to the second Agni, the Rain God, who sends down Rain. Rain, again, is offered to the third Agni, the Earth, who brings forth Food. Food is, in its turn, offered to the fourth Agni, the Father or Male, who elaborates in himself the generating fluid. Finally, this fluid is offered to the fifth Agni, the Mother or the Female, who delivers the Child.

The biological process, described in what may seem to be crude and mediæval terms, really reflects or echoes a more subtle and psychological process. The images used form perhaps part of the current popular notion about the matter, but the esoteric sense goes beyond the outer symbols. The Sky seems to be the far and tenuous region where the soul rests and awaits its next birth—it is

the region of Soma, the *own Home* of Bliss and Immortality. Now when the time or call comes, the soul stirs and journeys down—that is the Rain. Next, it enters the earth atmosphere and clothes itself with the earth consciousness. Then it waits and calls for the formation of the material body, first by the contribution of the father and then by that of the mother ; when these two unite and the material body is formed, the soul incarnates.

Apart from the question whether the biological phenomenon described is really a symbol and a cloak for another order or reality, and even taking it at its face value, what is to be noted here is the idea of a cosmic cycle, and a cosmic cycle that proceeds through the principle of sacrifice. If it is asked what there is wonderful or particularly spiritual in this rather *naif* description of a very commonplace happening that gives it an honoured place in the *Upanishads,* the answer is that it *is* wonderful to see how the Upanishadic Rishi takes from an event its local, temporal and personal colour and incorporates it in a global movement, a cosmic cycle, as a limb of the Universal Brahman. The *Upanishads* contain passages which a puritanical mentality may perhaps describe as " pornographic " ; these have in fact been put by some on the *Index expurgatorius.* But the ancients saw these matters with other eyes and through another consciousness.

We have, in modern times, a movement towards a more conscious and courageous knowledge of things that were taboo to puritan ages. Not to shut one's eyes to the lower, darker and hidden strands of our nature, but to bring them out into the light of day and to face them is the best way of dealing with such elements, which otherwise, if they are repressed, exert an unhealthy influence on the mind and nature. The Upanishadic view runs on the same lines, but, with the unveiling and the natural—and not merely naturalistic —delineation of these under-worlds (concerning sex and food), it endows them with a perspective *sub specie aeternitatis.* The sexual function, for example, is easily equated to the double movement of ascent and descent that is secreted in nature, or to the combined action of Purusha and Prakriti in the cosmic Play, or again, to the hidden fount of Delight that holds and moves the universe. In this view there is nothing merely secular and profane, but all is woven into the cosmic spiritual whole ; and man is taught to consider and to mould all his movements—of soul and mind and body—in the light and rhythm of that integral Reality [1].

The central secret of this trans-

[1] The secularisation of man's vital functions in modern ages has not been a success. It has made him more egocentric and blatantly hedonistic. From an occult point of view he has in this way subjected himself to the influences of dark and undesirable world-forces, has made an opening, to use an Indian symbolism, for Kali (the Spirit of the Iron Age) to enter into him. The sex-force is an extremely potent agent, but it is extremely fluid and elusive and uncontrollable. It was for this reason that the ancients always sought to give it a proper mould, a right continent, a fixed and definite channel ; the moderns, on the other hand, allow it to run free and play with it recklessly. The result has been, in the life of those born under such circumstances, a growing lack of poise and balance and a corresponding incidence of neurasthenia, hysteria and all abnormal pathological conditions.

figured consciousness lies, as we have already indicated, in the mystic rite or law of Sacrifice. It is the one basic, fundamental, universal Law that upholds and explains the cosmic movement, conformity to which brings to the thrice-bound human being release and freedom. Sacrifice consists essentially of two elements or processes : (1) The offering or self-giving of the lower reality to the higher, and, as a consequence, an answering movement of (2) the descent of the higher into the lower. The lower offered to the higher means the lower sublimated and integrated into the higher ; and the descent of the higher into the lower means the incarnation of the former and the fulfilment of the latter. The *Gita* elaborates the same idea when it says that by Sacrifice men increase the gods and the gods increase men and by so increasing each other they attain the supreme Good. Nothing is, nothing is done for its own sake, for an egocentric satisfaction ; all, even movements relating to food and to sex, should be dedicated to the Cosmic Being—Viswa Purusha—and that alone received which comes from Him.

NOLINI KANTA GUPTA

PACIFIST MINISTERS OF NORWAY

A number of Norwegian ministers have formed a pacifist group and started their pacifist propaganda. Various voices have been raised against their public work, claiming that these clergymen, in their quality of state officials, cannot rightly fight publicly against any form of war, defensive war included. The peace-loving ministers in their turn declare that all warfare goes against the spirit of Christ, and hence they feel obliged to resist war and to do all they can to eradicate the eventual causes of war. Being accused of law breaking, they answer by publishing a joint statement, consisting of some very salient points ; they feel that they are in conscience bound by the spirit of Christ, and find that the organized mass-killings of modern wars are against the Sermon on the Mount. Further that the Christian Church was an organ of peace until, before the 4th century, it transformed itself into a state church. "We are returning to the original Christian standpoint, as most clearly stated by Origen" and others. And "we opine that the church in largely leaving that standpoint is in part to be blamed for the state of affairs in the world to-day. Hence we absolutely feel ourselves in duty bound to work for the awakening of the church to a recognition of its guilt, and to go forward to gain an uncompromising pacifist standpoint in the spirit of Christ."

These honest words from clergymen sound encouraging in the ears of every seeker of truth. Honest and persevering work to introduce the "original Christian standpoint into the Christian Church" so-called will probably lead these men further than they now are able to foresee. First, a study of the original Christian standpoint will necessarily lead them to the discovery and—as may be hoped—the honest recognition that this standpoint was and is purely Buddhistic.

Oslo, Norway. A. H.

INDUSTRIOUS IDLENESS

[Miss Constance Williams gave up a successful business career in order to devote herself to evolving a true philosophy of life. She uses writing as a means of clarifying her thoughts.—EDS.]

It is one of the greatest failings of our Western civilisation that we do not cultivate the habit of contemplation, of reverie. The whole of our training is based on the assumption that to be busy is to be virtuous. The child or the adult who sits day-dreaming is condemned as a lazy good-for-nothing.

This kind of training has two main results. The first is that we feel guilty if we are still for a moment. We tend to exalt busyness as an ideal in its own right, without pausing to ask what we are achieving or whether our busyness is producing anything worth while.

The second result is an ingrained fear that life is slipping away from us and that we can do nothing to stop it. This means that we spend most of our time in looking forward with horror to old age. Instead of glorying in our youth and living every day to the full, we spoil our present enjoyment by keeping our eyes fixed anxiously on the future. We spend all the glorious, robust days of our youth working ourselves to exhaustion in order to prepare for the last few years, when, truth to tell, the senses are so blunted that very little is needed to produce contentment.

Both results tend to produce unhappiness, yet so ingrained has this insistence on busyness become that we are blind to the possibilities for happiness in the normal everyday world around us.

Country people are, as a general rule, far happier than town people. This is because they have retained the ability to reflect. Nature is all around them, calm and peaceful, pursuing her yearly round slowly and inexorably, and they watch and *think*. But in the town busy screeching machines, man's inventions mirroring his own dreadful restlessness, drown all attempts at quiet contemplation.

For the majority of us, life is a breathless frightened scramble to push as many things as possible into our mind, to acquire knowledge, as we say, in order to be a success in life. Yet so often all we acquire is a miscellaneous collection of unrelated facts. And we are so busy pushing these facts into our mind that we do not give it time to assimilate them.

Surely we should see that the mind is like the stomach ; we can't keep on cramming it full without giving it time to digest. And contemplation is the digestion of the mind.

If our mind is going to be something more than just a storeroom, we must meditate on the knowledge we have acquired, turn it over in our mind and see both sides of it, link it up with other ideas, and so produce something new. For that is the essence of genius—the ability to make new associations ; to see a connection, a link that other people have missed, between two things or two

ideas.

But to do this we must periodically pass through a phase of inactivity. We may call it lying fallow if we like. Just as a farmer knows his fields must lie fallow from time to time, so has every great thinker, from the earliest times down to the present day, known that he must give his mind a rest periodically if he is to produce good work.

It was Ovid who said, "Leisure nourishes the body, and the mind also is fed thereby; on the other hand, immoderate labour exhausts both."

But this apparent inactivity of the mind is really only the inactivity of one layer of it. The conscious mind may be at rest, but the unconscious is always busy. And the secret of great men is that they know how to use their unconscious mind. When they desire to produce original work on some topic, they supply all the material they can to their mind, knowing it will sink into the unconscious, and then they proceed to "forget" the subject for a week or more. They go away to play, or to bed, or to talk on other things, according to their several dispositions.

And all the while they are playing or sleeping or talking, this unconscious activity of the mind is going on, collating, associating. Then one day they will feel an uncontrollable desire to express themselves either on paper or in the workshop or the laboratory, and that which they produce will be the result of their unconscious thinking.

We all know the expression, "To sleep on a problem". Well, this is the same thing. We think over our problem in all its aspects and are unable to find a solution, and so we go to bed and to sleep—in other words, we leave it to our unconscious mind, for while our conscious mind sleeps, the unconscious is still working.

But by inactivity I do not mean laziness. The lazy person does not think at all. If our unconscious mind is going to be of any help to us, we must give it the material to work upon, that is, we must gather all the information we can about our subject, think all round it, meditate upon it.

But it is useless to flog our brain. Cramming is never successful, and to go on worrying about a problem after our conscious mind has done all that it can is to weary ourselves unnecessarily.

That is why we should never scold a child for day-dreaming. Day-dreaming is a state in which the conscious mind is almost in abeyance, a state very akin to sleep, when the unconscious mind is free to make whatever associations it likes. It is this state, which is very like true contemplation, which usually precedes the most brilliant "brain waves". Therefore day-dreaming, within reason of course, is a valuable habit to acquire in youth, for it results in an ability to free the mind of its conscious conventional *habits* of thinking.

Although this ability to be industriously idle is very rare, we can all cultivate it if we wish. But the majority of people are too busy to have time to think, and some even are busy because they are afraid to think. They use mental *clichés* for their

thought just as they use verbal *clichés* in their speech. This is the true laziness.

Nobody is busier than the person who is always minding other people's business. Yet no one will say that such a person is doing good work in the world. The person who is doing something worth while is far too much occupied with his own affairs to have time to worry about the affairs of other people.

A typical and an all too distressingly common figure in our modern cities is the busy, harassed person whose life is one breathless round of "getting things done" in a limited time. These people are desperately unhappy, yet so great is the power of habit and of inertia that they go on doing the same thing all their lives. Yet if they would only stop and think for a minute they would see that nothing forces them into that worrying busy round of duties but their own blind acceptance of other people's values, their dependence on other people's praise or blame.

We need not be unhappy in this way; we could free ourselves from this unhappiness if we really wanted to. There are financial considerations, I know. But these are greatly exaggerated by most of us. We are surrounded by a number of things we could just as well do without. We are artificial. We are becoming so much the slaves of our own labour-saving devices that we are incapable of managing without them.

Yet still, within reach of all of us, is that quiet life of thought and of contemplation that has been the ideal of all ages. It lies in our mind—yours and mine—this happiness, this contentment, that is worth untold vacuum cleaners and typewriters, adding-machines and printing-presses. None of these will really make our old age the happier, nor will the money of which they are the concrete manifestations.

But a quiet mind, a happy mind, that has experienced *all* of life, that has meditated on its experiences and drawn some useful conclusion from them, that mind will refuse to accept the sort of living that results in the frustration, the irritation, the unacknowledged misery of most "moderns", and it will know a serene old age that the "successful" ones can never hope to achieve.

CONSTANCE WILLIAMS

The actions to be performed are not any and every one. We are not to go on heedlessly and indiscriminately doing everything that is suggested. We must discover what actions ought to be performed by us and do them for that reason and not because of some result we expect to follow.—W. Q. JUDGE

THE USE OF LEISURE

[John Moore after experiencing a period of unemployment entered the career of teaching. His article fails to take into account the most vital factor in the problem of the use of leisure. How can a man determine appropriately the right use of his leisure, if he has no understanding of his own psychological constitution? A clean life and pure morals, an open mind and a desire to develop his personality along the right lines—all are dependent upon his view of himself and of life. If the Soul of man goes out like a flame when the body like the candle is exhausted, then who can blame a man for living sensuously till the night when life becomes extinct for evermore? Or if the Soul's eternal happiness after death is dependent on the word of recommendation spoken by his priest to his God, then surely by means of judicious bribery he can do what he likes. Only the Law of Karma shows the power of responsibility, of right endeavour and of consummate justice. This Law also makes a man realise that he is not a dying *corpus* but a Soul unfolding into immortality.—EDS.]

Man, in those countries which are termed civilised, has been "hoist with his own petard". He has invented and improved machinery to such an extent that to-day he is dominated by his own creature. Machinery has been so perfected that it replaces the men who made it: thousands are unemployed because machines can do their work more rapidly and more cheaply. In short, the "Age of Leisure" is upon a world unprepared for it.

The philosopher-historian Hegel contended that "the lesson of history is that men will not learn the lesson of history". The Industrial Revolution should have revealed the fact that machinery would increase man's leisure. Not heeding the warning, we have instead improved machinery to the verge of perfection and are just coming to realise that we have wrought our own undoing. For the machine, alas, does not help to support those it has displaced.

A dim realisation that the aim of man's work is to have more leisure is reflected in the present demand for forty-hour weeks and for holidays with pay. There are, however, few (if any) people who have been instructed in the use of that leisure. It is strange to reflect that while men are carefully trained in the elements and principles of their jobs, which are frequently distasteful to them, they have few constructive ideas on the use of the leisure which they prize.

Let us try to define a conception of leisure. Call it "slow, deliberate freedom"—for these are the ideas inherent in the conception of leisure. How far, ask yourself, are your own uses of your freedom from work in accordance with deliberateness and avoidance of hurry?

Not all of us have enjoyed the advantages of a classical education and its training, but there are few who cannot appreciate the point of the tag, "*Dulce est desipere in loco*". Although at times a certain degree of frivolity is in the circumstances legitimate, gambling and card-playing along with the other anti-social sociabilities are unlikely to appeal to the whole man in his saner "delibe-

rate" moments.

Social services are striving to alleviate the strain of unemployment by their attempt to give, to those affected, means of using their enforced leisure constructively. Attendance at classes and lectures is not obligatory; nor are absentees in any way victimised. But, as "a sop to Cerberus", the unemployed are offered classes to "keep their skill fresh" or to "train them for ultimate employment". When, ultimately, no employment is forthcoming, such people are likely to feel embittered against those who, though benevolent, failed to see that unemployment might possibly be not merely transitory.

Realising this, authorities should realise likewise that their service may be more effective if that possibility—or probability—is faced. If that attitude were taken, men would realise that their leisure was purely leisure and not necessarily a stepping-stone to further work. In some places this fact is recognised, and employed and unemployed alike enjoy equal facilities in their community-centres. This is all the state does at present towards helping individual choice.

When we come to decide on a proper use of leisure we are likely to meet with difficulties. Before laying down for himself a course of action, the deliberate, thinking man must decide on two points, *viz.*, (1) what will be the probable results of his actions and (2) whether those results will be good. The first is easily answered but the second takes us right away into ethical considerations, few people being able offhand to summarize what their general ethical policy really is.

Most people will admit on reflection that the principle of respect for personality is a good one on which to base action. This principle is more or less visible in the texts of all religions, being expressed in one or another form of words, *e.g.*, for Christians in the Sermon on the Mount. The principle in the various expressions is one and the same, even if there is disagreement on the working out of details of policy.

Setting aside as a waste, rather than a use, of leisure such activities as gambling, we may ask ourselves whether what we do contributes to our own, while not interfering with others', good. In applying this test we shall frequently see that many of our social activities are mere subservience to the herd-instinct. For example, dancing in vitiated air till the early hours of the morning may be defended as healthy exercise. But, while widening our social contacts, it may also prevent us from properly discharging our duties owing to fatigue the next morning. Respect for others may thus bring us to respect ourselves; we may gain true perspective. On the other hand, by moderation, we can realise the value of the exercise.

As free men, we have a right to break from the herd and to follow our own path, provided we are not making the mistake of thinking ourselves superior in so doing, but are merely anxious to please ourselves and to harm nobody. If we are sincere we shall in time be left free to our "eccentricity".

So many are the varied activities

open to people as ways of using leisure that it is difficult to classify them. Yet we must be able to do so to some extent before we can select types of activity for our own attention. Those interested in this problem must find stimulating such books as Cicely Hamilton's *Little Arthur's History of the Twentieth Century,* Newman's *Idea of a University,* Bertrand Russell's *Conquest of Happiness* and H. W. Durant's *Problem of Leisure.*

With these for guidance the individual may safely be left to make his choice according to his lights. If we are enlightened by respect for personality, we cannot go far wrong. Errors may surely be forgiven us if we err in all sincerity.

Applying this principle to our hobbies we find that most physical recreations may appeal to the whole man. In a game like golf, for instance, we have intellectual appreciation of the game allied to affection for it with both dominated by the will to play well. The game then may call into play our tripartite personality. But so long as such a game does not contribute to the pool of common good and so long as it frays tempers, it has little real value save as physical exercise.

Too frequently an activity which seems at first glance legitimate proves in the end unprofitable, when we apply the criterion of benefit to our own and others' personality. This seems to suggest that no one activity, but a combination of types of activity, is the solution to our problem of finding a suitable use for our leisure.

We must make a selection from the many and well-nigh unclassifiable activities which Durant calls "the machinery of leisure". Let us discriminate and combine various examples from what, to risk a wide generalisation, seem to be the two main types—the intellectual and the emotional. Obviously the two are interfused at times. There is often overlapping of an intellectual over an emotional type, or *vice versa.*

Reading, study, rambling, research, collecting are examples of the former and are active; cinemas, dances, sport and social activities are emotional and often demand passivity of mind. Happiness may be achieved or, if not comprehended, at least apprehended from a balanced selection of these. The balance will show itself in the man who, while having some creative activity, can relax. He will have a wider outlook and greater tolerance than the man who rides his hobby to death. The man of good will can do little harm if, with an effort to be free of prejudice, he selects according to the principle of nurturing the personality.

Our leisure, if it is to be complementary rather than opposed to work, must be used by the intellect and the emotions directed by the will. The good our leisure does must be judged by the degree of organisation in our striving (conative) life. Many war-time prison-camp suicides were men who, formerly depending on drink and cards for amusement, were left resourceless when suddenly deprived of these. They were not mentally organised. One wonders how many to-day, dependent on spoon-feeding by cinema and propaganda, could find support in their

own mental resources.

It must now be the duty of the philosophers in the modern State to indicate a path towards the solution of the problem—by education, by striving for a "living allowance" for all, by preaching against mindless passivity, by making man the intelligent master of the machine instead of its unthinking servant, by widening the scope of libraries, by cheapening books (which Mr. Wells thinks are too dear), by abolishing the "social premium on idleness", by evolving a new society which knows that the "Labour System" (as Miss Hamilton insists on calling it) is at an end, and by an effort to integrate the will of man to strive for the common good.

Ultimately, the organisation of a man's leisure depends on the individual himself. If the State, the philosopher or civilisation (whichever you will) is helpful, that individual can follow the right path. If he has a goodwill, he will desire to give to rather than to take from the pool of life's resources. By an ethical paradox, the more he gives the more he will gain.

H. Croome justly observes that the real problem of leisure is that of why there is a problem at all; and that the problem cannot be solved alone, being as it is one with the problem of life in society. Admitting this, I do not claim to have said the last word on the subject. Experience teaches, and if this article has perchance suggested ideas to or stimulated thought on this problem among those more versed in the philosophies than myself, I am so far content. "*Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto.*"

JOHN MOORE

Once grasp the idea that universal causation is not merely present, but past, present and future, and every action on our present plane falls naturally and easily into its true place, and is seen in its true relation to ourselves and to others. Every mean and selfish action sends us backward and not forward, while every noble thought and every unselfish deed are stepping-stones to the higher and more glorious planes of being. If this life were all, then in many respects it would indeed be poor and mean; but regarded as a preparation for the next sphere of existence, it may be used as the golden gate through which we may pass, not selfishly and alone, but in company with our fellows, to the palaces which lie beyond.—*H. P.* BLAVATSKY, *The Key to Theosophy*, p. 199.

THE CHILDLESS MOTHER

[Fern Mack narrates her passage from outer dependence to Self-Dependence, which latter came to her through W. Q. Judge's *Ocean of Theosophy*, a very able exposition meant for the genuine enquirer.—EDS.]

"As the end to be reached is self-dependence with perfect calmness and clearness, he is from the beginning made to stand alone, and this is for most of us a difficult thing which frequently brings on a kind of despair."

From William Q. Judge's *Echoes from the Orient*.

Although the above statement appears to me (the friend who knew her best, and least) to be a perfect present-day likeness of one whom I shall refer to as "the chiidless mother", nevertheless I should like, if I may, to present the picture-negative under process of development, believing that the illumined viewpoint of THE ARYAN PATH's readers may prove to differ somewhat from mine, a mere amateur's by comparison.

Even before the so-called age of reason she was what one could call an ordained mother. Her dolls were not something with which she played, but living breathing personalities with whom she lived.

She gave them all of everything she had to give : herself. Which meant that she gave them a slavish devotion in addition to all the other intense feelings that go to make up the generous heart and the imaginative mind of a love-starved child, brought up alone.

At night, when she dropped off to sleep, it was to the hands of her dolls that she clung (although she thought at the time it was they who clung to her hands!), and when she arrived at school age it was to her dolls that she returned when school was over.

She even shared with them the great engulfing fear of her life, which was the fear of death. This fear, like some uninvited guest at the cradle of her birth, had been with her, unwelcomed, since she could remember. To love another as wholeheartedly as she loved her widowed mother and her dolls, and then to have to think of that other as one day dying, was a racking pain almost too sharp to be borne. And to enjoy with such intensity of feeling the simple act of just living—which meant among other delightful things just lying on one's back in the tall backyard grass and watching the changing clouds overhead, or settling oneself in the big swing which after a little effort on one's part would take one soaring through the upper air—and then to have to think of *oneself* as some day dying was almost as bad.

Upon reaching an age when her puritanical but well-intentioned mother considered she had now grown too old for dolls, she was commanded to give them all away to "younger and less fortunate children".

The years since then have brought to her the loss of close friend and of distant mother, but over neither of these deaths did she suffer more

savagely than over that living death of doll distribution.

Those dolls had been the only real confidantes of her childhood years, the only ones with whom she could talk freely and at length without her speech (after the first shy rush of words) faltering and halting. THEY —her dolls—had known about her fear of death : that stalking fear which hovered always in the fertile background of her mind.

After a year of being childless (a year the stark loneliness of which it is better to skip over even in this epistle of utter truth) the ordained mother who was yet but a little girl, and a lost little girl at that, in part refound herself through the persons of May and June, who, although the products of her imagination, were none the less her living daughters and for the next few years her constant companions.

While acknowledging the fact that many lonely children have been known to create imaginative companions, it seems significant to me that in the case of this " childless mother " it was not playmates she created, but daughters !

More years passed, years still governed by her inborn love of children, her painful happiness at the miracle of life and her equally painful unhappiness at the fear of death. Then when she was in her late " teens " it was discovered that she had a serious heart ailment. Once while slowly regaining consciousness after a fainting spell in which it had been necessary to give her oxygen, she heard herself pronounced dead by the attending physician. Wildly she thought : " I must find strength to raise my lids, a finger, to make some movement, because I don't want to die—I—DON'T—WANT—TO —DIE ! " . . . .

A year later when a wonderful opportunity presented itself for her to travel across the States to take up permanent residence in a land famous for its healthy climate, one of the leading heart specialists in the city where she lived advised against it, predicting quick and certain death if she attempted to make the long train journey over the high mountain ranges which she would have to cross. But because she wanted desperately to leave the city of her birth, which ever since the too early parting with her dolls had meant for her great loneliness, she decided to brave the hazardous journey.

It was on the train one night when passing through one of the highest of the mountain ranges that she had her dream : Wherever she looked was Space, great wide vistas of earth and sky which even as she gazed separated out into human forms. Women's forms, with their children near them. When the mothers suddenly merged back into the pulsating background of air and earth and sky, the children were left behind ; they and the girl. As if drawn by some hidden force the children advanced ; some shyly and others timidly, a few proudly and more eagerly to where she stood alone, apart.

And because she had eyes that saw, ears that heard and a heart that understood, they, the children—light and dark, bond and free—children of every class and creed, laid down their

gifts : honest love, simple trust and characters like pure white paper awaiting the writer, Life.

When the children like their mothers before them had blended into the background of their sky and earth, flowers were seen blooming in their place. Flowers of every clime and colour, which from some subconscious need for mental food and spiritual drink grew with faces lifted to receive the sun's light and the rain's caress.

It was then that the watching girl, born into the world with love stored in her great mother-heart, but with no one to give it to, herself became the sun and the rain. As her demanding Ego merged into that of the impersonal Sun and the ministering rain, there breathed forth from the atmosphere concert music, short slow violin forms which were so emotionally eloquent as to make her, years later, wonder if what she had heard could possibly have been Schumann's lost violin concerto.

The dream which was more than a dream ended. She awoke on a pillow wet with her tears. But she held in her soul a conviction that in some mystic, yet probably obscure way, she was one day to be a tangible instrument for some great intangible work that would live on in the lives of others and in the lives of their children's children long after that Death which she so feared had come at last to claim her.

The years succeeding that dream and up to the near present saw her a University student, an office clerk and a librarian, a happy wife (though childless), an active clubwoman, a welfare worker and something of a professional artist ; certainly a very busy life. Yet two emotions, her fear of death and her love of children, never ceased to dominate her. Never, that is, until she approached the region of Spiritual consciousness, which happened after she had been living in her present home for a matter of some six years. But I digress—

From that hour on the train when she awoke from the dream that was more than a dream, children of all ages, complexions and social status seemed strangely drawn to her on first acquaintance. Unable to call her " Mother " they asked permission to call her " Aunt ". It was as though they knew instinctively of her untold love for them, her infinite understanding of their every mood and her inborn desire to serve unselfishly.

It stands to reason that a woman of studious inclination and limited circumstances, whose hours were crowded with both professional work and household duties, would find at times the constant claims of other women's children most exacting. Yet despite this fact, she never once in all her life gave a child a negative smile, an indifferent ear or a derisive answer.

Many a small chest heaving with sobs has flung itself against her barren breasts, even as many a joyful child wanting to share the miracle of some new toy has come flying straight to her arms. It was as though her arms aching with their weight of emptiness were yet able to hold something that either brought Love closer or held Terror away, according to the child's need.

Careful always never to interfere

in any way with their own mothers' prior rights and privileges, of which she was sensitively aware, she nevertheless had a way of getting the result she sought. Instead of commenting disparagingly on the new guns the boys brought over at Christmas to show her with pride, she quietly brought them books of animal and bird-life which made the taking of defenceless life seem a less sporting thing. She smiled tolerantly upon the red-painted finger nails and the artificial hair waves to which the mothers of the neighbourhood treated their seven to twelve-year-old daughters each Saturday, yet managed at the same time to foster in those children's minds an appreciation for a truer kind of beauty.

Denied the natural mother's privilege of counting calories or starching little garments, she concerned herself with keeping the children's minds healthy, and with starching their young characters by instilling in them a conscious love for honesty, unselfishness and truth.

The militarism of her small boy devotees, the gossip and the snobbishness of some of their sisters —such things caused her real concern.

As accustomed to hearing the song of the meadow-lark as they were to seeing the sky above them, the hearts of certain of her young friends had been blind and deaf to the song's mystic message until she moved into their neighbourhood. Soon, however, in addition to their school drawings, the children were bringing her the first new buds of spring, eager to share with one they knew would thrill with them, the mystery of the unfurling leaf, the colouring of the flower.

With a twisting pain in her heart she silently rebelled at times at being forced to play what seemed at best an impersonal part in the life of other women's children.

She would have liked to experience the physical mother's passive acceptance of child love as something which was her natural right. Instead, she taught the children of friends, of neighbours and of strangers, that the more one gives away the more one has, and that thoughts are of vastly greater importance than things.

I'll admit that to me who knew her best (and least) it appeared at times a stultifying effort. But as a celebrated authoress (since passed on) once wrote of her in quoting from "The Shield of Silence"— "This shall be her reward—the Ideal shall be real to her."

But, living up to one's own aims and ideals is one thing, conquering one's lifelong fear of Death (which you recall was her *other* "legacy of the past to the present") is another. Particularly is this so when one considers the fact that until a few weeks prior to this writing she had read no Theosophical literature whatsoever.

Then she whose every decision, whose almost every act throughout her life had been born of a spiritual past of whose positive existence she knew without knowing how she knew it, came into the possession of W. Q. Judge's *Ocean of Theosophy*.

"I have found it!" she breathed after reading the book, the quickening ecstasy of her inward reality

making speech imperative. "I have found the 'lost chord of Christianity', the doctrine of reincarnation!"

Whereupon there followed a moment timeless and unconfused in which she laid aside the book, rose and left the familiar lighted room to go out into the stillness of the night, even as her soul would one day set aside this life, and would leave the familiar body in which it too was housed.

To the stars blinking down from their immeasurable height she said, "We humans are divine souls. Yes, but we are also results. To-day's results of what we have gone through in other lives. To-morrow's results are to-day's Karma. This truth is as accurate as the laws of mathematics."

Thus her soul spoke through her mind, and as it did so, the God in her listened from His eternity.

I KNOW because I was the friend who knew her best (and least) and she was—me.

FERN MACK

Our duty is to keep alive in man his spiritual intuitions. To oppose and counteract—after due investigation and proof of its irrational nature—bigotry in every form, religious, scientific, or social, and *cant* above all, whether as religious sectarianism or as belief in miracles or anything supernatural. What we have to do is to seek to obtain *knowledge* of all the laws of nature, and to diffuse it. To encourage the study of those laws least understood by modern people, the so-called Occult Sciences, *based on the true knowledge of nature* instead of, as at present, on *superstitious beliefs based on blind faith and authority*. Popular folk-lore and traditions, however fanciful at times, when sifted may lead to the discovery of long-lost, but important, secrets of nature. The Society, therefore, aims at pursuing this line of inquiry, in the hope of widening the field of scientific and philosophical observation.—H. P. BLAVATSKY, *The Key to Theosophy*, p. 40.

MERCURY ON A HILL

[Laurence Clark "feels drawn to work in the fields of literature in the widest sense and has written poems and plays".—EDS.]

I suppose it was habit as much as anything else which had brought me to the same holiday resort as I had visited for the last twenty years. Indeed, the place was a pleasant one: I think I shall never forget it as I first saw it, the June after my discharge from a European army—the cool, spacious, high mountain valley, musical with torrents ; the panorama of pine-clad slopes and swan-white mountains ; the grassy knoll in the centre of this valley, open on all sides to the sunbeams, on which stood the simple and sweet-smelling wooden hotel in which I stayed. Coming upon this one evening, soon after the horrors of France, I had indeed felt like "Mercury new-lighted on a Heaven-kissing hill" : the place had been to me a shining new country, a symbol of the new post-war world, as yet untrammelled by the confusing stupidities of disorganised mankind, apparently made only for the calm actualisation of sane and human wishes.

But this year things were different. A motor-road had been built up here from the nearest town ; there was a red petrol-pump in the village ; and cargoes of men and rouged women appeared at regular intervals, extending into these upper regions, previously untarnished, the flaccid culture of the European vales. Motor-horns blared among the age-old rhythms of the native cow-bells ; our favourite banks of gentians and eidelweiss were cleared by the tourists. Yet there developed annoyances even more acute than these.

For all of us in the hotel had had our nerves set on edge and sharpened against one another by a series of fruitless quarrels in which we had enmeshed ourselves. In the past, I had generally found that people of different nationalities, owing to a natural curiosity about one another, had in this solitary place entered into pleasant relations. I had met some good friends here. But this year all was changed. There were constant quarrels.

After a few weeks, it had come to such a pass that the few visitors had gathered into four little groups, each of which would have nothing to do with the others. Constant manœuvres, on which they spent all their ingenuity, took place among the groups, each plotting to get the best seats in the sitting-room or dining-room or on the verandah. In earlier years we had never bothered about such trifles ; indeed, we had felt it shameful to keep others out of the best places. But this year there was a bitter contest of pride between these four hostile groups ; and the contest, inflaming the pride of all still further, rapidly intensified our now considerable animosities. It was as though an explosive atmosphere, almost a visible thing, concocted of the human gases of fear and hatred, had been generated in this little tim-

bered house among the beautiful mountains. One could hardly strike a match to light a cigar without fearing that one had wounded some inflamed grievance in such a way as to lead to that imminent general squabble which would blow up and shatter our whole holiday.

Who had brought us to this *impasse*? I could never become really clear about this. Two old women had been the original squabblers. The rest of us, according to nationality, had taken sides; these two groups, owing to internal differences, had split into four; and so, at an increasing rate, trouble had been brewed among us, until it had come to the present fabulous intensity.

Now, when a European takes a holiday these days, quiet is above all what he wants. Every visitor here wanted quiet; and each was cheated of it by the tangle of intrigue in which he had become embroiled. Thus a sense of universal frustration was added to that of bad temper. No one would now yield to his enemy. The position was a deadlock. It would have been comical, if it had not been so intimately annoying.

One evening, as I was strolling back to the little hotel through this vale which I had once found so wonderful, I decided that I could stay no longer. The hotel had become unbearable to me, and there was nowhere else to stay. It was bitter to me to have to leave the place, which was a chosen arena of my dreams; going away caused me the same pain as I had felt at other times when abandoning some purpose which I had thought to be invaluable, but which had proved in practice to be beyond my powers of realisation. It was an abdication of treasured hopes.

Dark was the evening as I walked back to put my decision into effect. My watch told me there was as yet an hour to go until sundown; but clouds were massed among the mountains; as I approached the tiny wooden hotel, lightning flashed out behind it, jerking it for a moment into a staggering silhouette against the jagged glare. A sickening comparison reminded me of explosions which I had seen in France. This confirmed me in my resolve instantly to leave the place.

Large, loose drops of rain were stinging down onto the mountain turf, as I reached the door of the hotel.

As soon as I entered I heard from upstairs the noise of shouting. I ran towards it—up the staircase, along a corridor, out on to the verandah. Weeks of bad feeling had apparently come to a head. All the visitors were there, vociferating and angry. I gathered that they had been playing jazz-records until the storm came, and that now, while the heavy rain was damaging the gramophone, the groups were quarrelling as to which of them should have the privilege of carrying the machine indoors. There had long been quarrels as to who had the first right to use that dilapidated and dissonant bit of machinery.

A flash of lightning split the gathering gloom. Thunder broke, in a howl of hollow triumph, reverberating round this basin of the mountains, as though the rock quaked and would give way. Then there was a moment's silence, in which we heard the rushing

of the torrent very clearly, before the heavy rain fell once again with a hushing sound.

" Will you excuse me if I light the lamp ? "

The frightened group turned about. We had not noticed a quiet, stern man, of indefinite age, who was sitting by the fireplace. We agreed to his request, and in a minute the room was flooded with yellow light.

He gave a reminiscent sigh, and began to talk in an aery voice which tempered what he had to say with a note of peaceful exhilaration, " I was tired of the European cities. They are in such a stupid state of fear, petty jealousy, and useless, because uncreative, patriotism. I was tired of the spectacle of millions caught up in the vicious circle of ill-motived, ill-directed activity. I thought I must come up onto the heights, where certainly I should find the people honest, tolerant and peaceful, possessing that patient wisdom which, as it matures through the years, must slowly re-educate and reconstruct human society. That is how I come to be among you, ladies and gentlemen."

He bowed slightly. For a while nobody spoke. We were conscious of the departing storm, the receding thunder and the last flutters of lightning outside. A certain overcharged electrical atmosphere in the room had also disappeared : suddenly it was unexpectedly pleasant in the golden glow of the lamp.

Conversation sprang up. Our minds met in a consideration of our obsession, the European situation. All joined in. And each in emphasising the unfortunate and ridiculous positions into which each government had been thrust in this disorganised continent, confessed—in terms of a subtle esotericism which the others understood—his or her own idiocy during the past weeks. A mass of accumulated grievance was thus relieved ; and by the time we sat down to supper our minds had been so loosened and reconciled to one another that we sat down in an atmosphere of mutual delight, pacific for the first time since we came there.

" But now ", a woman was asking, after the meal was over, " how are we in fact to extend this solution of our difficulties, which we have outlined, across a troubled continent, across a war-blackened world ? "

" By turning it inside out ", said the man. " A simple process. By fashioning the world in accordance with our sane and human wishes, rather than allowing our wishes to be fashioned and distorted and dispersed by an imaginary monster called the world. That is the human function —to overcome the world.

" The world is a subjective formulation. It is a story which we have made up for ourselves, to fulfil our wishes. Bad wishes make a bad world. The world is, to an incredible extent, whatever we choose to make it.

" Man imagines himself to be the product of circumstances. It would be truer to say that his circumstances are the product of himself. At every moment, consciously or unconsciously, we are deciding—accepting, rejecting—apathy and indecision are in themselves a form of deciding. A decided man is never powerless. So it happens, by a profound process

which few Occidentals suspect, that as we in truth wish and imagine and deeply will ourselves to be, so we come to be. We and the world are self-created. In the world, we witness outwardly the cinematograph films which we have ourselves created in the studios of consciousness.

"To your minds, with their admirable and unique power of penetrating and mastering by technique physical and mechanistic processes, inside and outside the human being, these ideas will at first seem fantastic. Yet only through them will you be able to direct your technical achievements to human good. You will say that coal-mines created Newcastle, moist weather created the Lancashire cotton trade, and will give instance after instance to prove that it is material considerations which make humanity what it is in mind and belief. This emphasis of yours upon material phenomena has been a thing of immense value and importance; for through your science you are preparing for a unique achievement by humanity, the technical mastery of the earth, with the abolition of a vast proportion of human toil and the consequent release of billions of human hours for other pursuits. But your emphasis on the material, while it has prepared the way for this possible result, is nevertheless an overemphasis; it will no longer suffice as your world-outlook; unless corrected by a true conception of man's function as a moral, not an entirely instinctive, being, it will lead you to disaster and to the loss of all that you have won. Not only coal made Newcastle; it took men to see the possibilities and to get to work on them. The present time needs, imperatively demands, men to see and work upon *its* possibilities. Otherwise, disaster!

"Through certain ages, I admit, man may be so cramped in his husk of matter that all other considerations seem vague indeed. There has been such an age in Europe—an age full of material work, empty of the necessary directive spiritual activity. It has left its mark—a troubled continent, a war-blackened world, symbols of widespread mental upset. Darwin's *Origin of Species* has been in popular fancy your actual if unofficial Scripture. I repeat, this has left its mark. Man, abdicating from all loftier self-consideration, began to conceive of his destiny in terms of the animal world, to see himself as an animal. Therefore, being self-created, he began in the relations of economic-political life to behave like an animal. The sense of responsibility, man for man, was rejected; each began to use his faculties—so much vaster than those of any beast—not to create a world for humanity to live and grow in, but to prosecute an egotistic 'struggle for existence'. He armed himself against his companions; his state, against its companion-states. Being himself more than an animal, when animal behaviour became his prototype, he became a being more terrible, more callous, more destructive than the most magnificent beast of prey. Machine-guns mowed down men, as machines mow fields of hay. Gas poisoned the atmosphere. To such a pass your beliefs led you. The results are before you. Animals may behave as animals, and the harmony of things will not be disturbed; but

when men behave like animals and use their human powers to this debased end, then race-suicide is the logical sequel.

"So we must now reconsider ourselves. We must no longer infringe the law of our being; for, as recent and impending events remind us, it is stronger then we are; and, if we break it, inevitably it will break us. We must first envisage and believe in the New Order; then it will be achieved. Remember that we and the world are self-created; and then we shall realize that our spiritual intention is all-powerful over matter. Only he who realizes this—that the reality lies in the wish—has been born into freedom and independence; and only he will act effectively. Those who have not realized it are yet held prisoners to material claims and doomed to self-centred and ineffectual antics. Our New Order must incorporate and develop what is valuable in the old. Let us be charitable, devoted to the good of all, harmonious in word and deed, patient, unruffled, profoundly indifferent as to how we fare in temporal disguises; let us place truth before all things; and let us work towards our end constantly, in full and joyful human energy, for what vocation is fairer than ours? New men and women will come to help and to supersede us. They are the new world. Numbers there will only make it richer and more valuable for all. This heritage of technical mastery and of individual spiritual freedom awaits all who choose to claim it, and to free themselves from the stunting shackles of the past."

On that note our talk ended that evening. Before any of us were down for breakfast in the morning, the stranger had already departed. But he had left us fine weather. The spirits of all were released from conflict into creativeness. The world was once more before us like a thing unused. Rain had washed every flower in the valley; the rough streams, filled with fresh water, tumbled their foam under a blue sky; poppies, gentians and crocuses glittered, fanned by a light reviving breeze out of the east. Dew lay like a sheen on the mountain turf, an untrammelled area before us.

The oppressive weather of the evening before now seemed an impossibility; and all breakfasted together on what had once more become a "Heaven-kissing hill".

LAURENCE CLARK

Said the Earth, "Lord of the Shining Face (*the Sun*) my house is empty ....Send thy sons to people this wheel (*Earth*). Thou hast sent thy seven sons to the Lord of Wisdom. Seven times doth He see thee nearer to Himself; seven times more doth He feel thee. Thou hast forbidden Thy servants, the small rings, to catch Thy light and heat, Thy great Bounty to intercept on its passage. Send now to Thy servant the same!"—*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. II, 27.

GIFTED CHILDREN

THEIR NATURE AND THEIR NEEDS

[G. S. Krishnayya is the Vice-Principal and Professor of Education at the Teachers' College, Kolhapur. He here examines the well-worn problem of the education of nascent geniuses and of freaks. Programmes and curricula are apt to fail unless in their preparation the vitally important doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma are taken into consideration. The unfolding soul is ageless, and true education consists in drawing out the soul's potentialities from within. The polishing of the brain and the training of the sensorium carried out by modern teachers hinder and frustrate the task of the Soul and prevent it from carrying out its duty to its present *persona* or mask. Modern education succeeds in killing more geniuses than it helps to fulfil themselves. H. P. Blavatsky has shown the right way.—EDS.]

There is no more serious source of waste than the neglect of genius in our schools and colleges. Millions are spent on the mediocre, while the gifted child is thwarted by a system evolved to meet the needs of the average mind. Paradoxical though the statement may seem, the most retarded children in our schools are the brightest. They usually receive the least attention—unless Satan finds mischief for these idle brains. These can do from twice to twenty-five times as much work from twice to twenty-five times as well as the dull, and can read three or four times as fast. But the teacher concentrates on the average, and the brilliant child is left to slackness and boredom.

The exceptionally bright child fares no better at home. He receives neither the assistance which a stimulating environment can give nor the sympathetic encouragement so necessary for the natural unfolding of his talents. He is often made conceited and self-conscious, and a strain too great for his physical frame is imposed upon him. He lives a stunted life or develops into a freak. Even amongst exceptionally bright children there are several different types and what is good for one may not be good for another.

Take the children endowed with a good memory. They are usually considered "birth" because they are ahead of other children of the same age and class. They "learn" because they retain the lessons and can reproduce them as a sponge returns the water it has absorbed. Success in school is not altogether an index of mental excellence. A striking memory is not sufficient. Not infrequently very mediocre minds, having a good though mechanical memory, outshine their betters, before the higher types of reasoning are very much in demand. When that time comes they are left helplessly behind. Such children require direction along lines in which their natural endowment will assist them in developing skill, *i.e.*, where routine and mechanical recall are in demand.

Now pass on to a group of undoubted superiority. There are some children whose development is more rapid than that of an ordinary child but who lack striking precocity. They travel as it were in a motor

car while the others ride horseback or plod along on foot. As long as the health and the strength of such children keep pace with their mental advancement, there is nothing to fear. But they should be given the opportunity to learn according to their quickened rate and to execute tasks commensurate with their ability. They need, however, careful observation and skilful handling. At the first sign of tension adjustment becomes absolutely necessary.

Rapid promotion is one way of dealing with special brightness and is a good method when a brilliant child's unusual abilities have not been challenged by ordinary school work. But intellectual maturity is not the sole criterion. Children already younger than their classmates and not very strong should advance at the normal rate, staying out of school, if necessary, part of the time and having the benefit of an enriched course of studies. The child who is head and shoulders above the rest may be encouraged to take part in more activities and thus enrich his experience and develop socially.

Grouping children according to mental capacity is another solution. In one New York Public School one of the fifty boys and girls between eight and eleven picked from the top 10,000 of New York's million schoolchildren may be found working out a complicated chess move, another may be explaining a gyropilot to a third, and other groups may be studying the theory of telephonic communication, radio, the President's gold-buying policy and similar subjects. The regular school work is finished in the morning and the afternoons are free for "research projects" selected by the children. In most schools such pupils would be pushed ahead and would arrive in high school too young for wholesome adjustment with their older classmates; these fifty will reach high school at the normal age but with a fund of knowledge far beyond normal.

A more difficult group is composed of children brilliant in certain directions and dull in others. If such children lose their balance and get out of touch with normal life conditions, their special talents may lead them to anti-social acts. Children of this group need a training which makes all other mental activities focus on their speciality, giving them power along socially constructive lines. Book studies need to be coordinated with their life interest. Under the guidance of wise parents and teachers such children should become social assets, and in later years their specialized efficiency should enable them to make a unique cultural contribution to the world. What they need is re-orientation—mental and emotional. Unless the child's main interest is taken as the starting-point, and he is encouraged to enter the field of learning from that point, he may become averse to study and all-round development and degenerate into a drifter and a narrow-minded egotist, devoid of social purpose and human interest.

In some, special or general excellence is associated with tension. Here you have the genius and the crank, the great leader of men, the prince of commerce, the poet and the philosopher, the musical prodigy and

the genuine artist. The distinction between this group and the previous one depends upon the equipoise of the nervous system and the strength of mental stamina. At any moment of tension one-sidedness can turn into a pathological condition. In individuals of this type sentiment is apt to overpower reason, or there is cleverness untempered by qualities of the heart, or the ego is exaggerated and morbidly sensitive.

There are striking instances of supernormal ability in special lines. Avadhani, a young Hindu from Bombay, is reported to be able to recite on one hearing any poem in any language. A Lithuanian had by heart 2,500 volumes. Niebuhr, the German historian, is said to have restored from memory an account book that had been accidentally burned. Some are endowed with a photographic mind. Not all such prodigies, however, are persons of general mental excellence. Some children who exhibit most prodigious ability in certain well-circumscribed fields are in all others far below normal. Some may be clearly feeble-minded, in which case their special gift, the result of a mechanical process in the brain, has no significance for their intellectual powers. A young man looking distinctly stupid can tell you instantly on what day of the week your birthday would fall this year or on what week-day you were born, if you merely give him the date of your birth. Another can give immediate answers to complex mathematical problems involving long rows of figures. Such persons are merely living calculating machines. There are chess prodigies who can hold their own against veteran experts. These and other types are not unfamiliar in India.

Another class which has supplied us with many outstanding names is composed of those who develop marvellous excellence without losing balance of mind. Genius represents the most brilliant type of this order. Whatever may be the essence of genius, it shows itself in the ease with which work of great importance is performed. Genius is instinct acting on a higher plane. In the genius too there is the mechanical element, more of instinctive impulse than of conscious application, but the difference here is shown in the way in which the genius consciously makes use of his own instinctive endowments for higher purposes. In this class you would put Otto Pöhler of Braunschweig who began to read at the tender age of fifteen months. Winifred Sackville Stoner, Jr., of Pittsburg could read when sixteen months old and could keep a diary at two years. She learnt typing at the age of three ; at four she wrote stories for newspapers and spoke eight languages ; at twelve she was ready for post-graduate work in any university. Macaulay is an illustrious member of the group. He read incessantly at the age of three ; at seven he began *A Compendium of Universal History* and at eight he wrote *A Treatise to Convert the Natives of Malabar to Christianity*. Mozart showed remarkable musical ability at three ; at four he played minuets and composed short pieces, and at five he performed in public. But he was an impulsive, erratic personality, never balanced, and

was always in want. When he had exhausted his opportunities and nerve force in a spendthrift way, he became morbid and died at the early age of thirty-five. Early manifestations of genius, however, are not incompatible with prolonged and even late development. Francis Galton, the English scientist, before his fifth birthday, wrote in a letter that he could "read any English book, say all the Latin substantives and adjectives and active verbs besides fifty-two lines of Latin poetry". By the age of six he was conversant with the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and could read French. *Hereditary Genius* appeared in his fiftieth year and *Natural Intelligence* in his sixty-eighth. Haydn, Beethoven, Michael Angelo, Milton, Goethe, Lord Bacon, Locke, Berkeley, Descartes, Spinoza and Kant are all examples of precociousness accompanied by a lengthy process of development. Nevertheless the danger of overtension is always present in men of great original power, and therefore watchful care is a constant requirement, unless there is a virile physical basis for exceptional excellence.

There still rages a lively controversy in regard to nature-nurture contributions to intellect. Heredity plays an important rôle in determining the degree of intelligence a given individual possesses, but often without a favourable environment inherited ability cannot flower. Irregularity in mental growth is sometimes due to variations in wealth and to environment which affect the unfolding of intelligence.

In this connection it is worth while to remember that each child has budding "nascent" periods for the different forms of mental work. We might develop a large number of children to undreamt-of mental alertness and efficiency if we made proper use of these budding interests before they vanished. It must not be forgotten that the school was made for the child and not the child for the school.

Regimented mass instruction may destroy the special talents of individuals. Adjustment of methods to capacities will mean working with the grain of the child's unique possibilities and not against it. No school—and no home—is satisfactorily organised until it makes such provision for every boy and girl as will enable them to work up to the maximum of their capacity. One of the major tasks of our schools is to select and to stimulate those creative minds which constitute a small but highly important fraction of our population. Exceptionally bright children must be educated in a manner fair to them and helpful to the race. From among them come our leaders and builders, our sages and scientists, our prophets and our martyrs—as also our cranks, perverts, felons and destroyers. Much is at stake—for both the individual and the nation. Here is an investment which will pay large dividends.

G. S. KRISHNAYYA

NEW BOOKS AND OLD

THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL DOCTRINES OF CONTEMPORARY EUROPE

To-day, five major doctrines divide and antagonise Europe. That unfortunate fact is the basis of a very useful volume (from whose title that of this article is taken) compiled by Mr. M. Oakeshott and recently published by the Cambridge University Press (10*s.* 6*d.*), with a brief foreword by Professor Ernest Barker. It is a purely documentary work, its simple but valuable plan being to let each of these doctrines —Representative Democracy, Catholicism, Communism, Fascism and National Socialism—speak for itself in "the best available statements, sometimes official, always authoritative, of the more important elements" composing it. The Fascist section, for example, draws on Mussolini and on extracts from Italian Fascist laws, the National Socialist on Hitler, Rosenberg, and Nazi promulgations. Communism is represented by Marx, Engels, Lenin and the 1936 U.S.S.R. Constitution, and Catholicism mainly by Papal Encyclicals 1881-1937. For Democracy, "a tradition of ideas rather than a fully coherent system", we have citations from Lincoln, de Tocqueville, Thomas Paine, Cobbett, T. H. Green and especially John Stuart Mill. In no case do the selections suggest bias, and there is a strict minimum of editorial comment. The value of the compilation for those who would study the theory of any or all of these doctrines should be evident.

Such a study is the purpose of the present article, which bases itself upon rather than reviews Mr. Oakeshott's book. Here are these five doctrines, or at least four of them, dividing not only Europe but a great part of the world both by frontiers and (less markedly) by classes. Catholicism, it is true, stands a little apart from the others as in the main a secondary doctrine, always co-existing, if only on sufferance, with one of the other forms. (Ireland is Catholic, but democratic; Austria, in pre-Nazi days, was Catholic, but Fascist.) But secondary though it may be, its influence is evident, and it has special interest as the only one among the five claiming a specifically theological validation. Certainly all the other four would declare themselves to be universal doctrines which, in the Fascist phrase, "by fulfilling themselves, have significance in the history of the human spirit", but that will seem the same thing only to those who are prepared to identify humanity not with religion in the broader sense but, as in the case of Catholicism, with some particular exclusive theology and ecclesiasticism.

The point is important, for it is the primary contention of this article that so far as these doctrines do

seriously conflict—and only blindness can deny that their mutual enmities to-day threaten European and even world civilisation—they do so principally by reason of their inherent secularity, their lack of a real religious spirit. This applies to Catholicism as much as to any of the others.

This may need some explanation, for it is essential to distinguish between religion and theology or ecclesiasticism, and to clarify that distinction it is further necessary to indicate the fundamental nature of human experience as, at least in our present stage of consciousness, inescapably individualistic. I-know and (let us agree) you-know, but it is a pure figure of speech to assert that we-know other than as two not merely separable but actually separated units. This applies to every sphere of knowledge whatsoever. Your knowledge, whether of God or Man, Heaven or Earth, may be in every way superior to mine, but you cannot make it mine by imposing it upon me; use what means you will, it can become mine only as my capacity for understanding accords with and is equal to yours. Add another fact: that *no* human knowledge is *ever* complete, still less is *any* human statement of it *ever* final. Since no object exists in isolation, complete knowledge of any one thing would comprehend the universe, and not only in time but in eternity: it would be the understanding of God. Human seeing grasps no more than aspects. We may develop mentally and spiritually by constant extension of vision, but even for humanity at its wisest completeness remains infinitely distant. Assume revelation, if you will, and still the vital point remains that the grasp of human consciousness, whatever confronts it, must still be only partial; a pearl before a swine is, to mix one's proverbs, no better than a sow's ear. Heaven may speak, but men will hear deafly and repeat stammeringly.

A Church or a State, therefore, may inherit a tradition, but it has no right to assert an authority, for what it repeats is no more than this or that individual's interpretation of the teaching, and, furthermore, that teaching can have power for us only as we *freely* respond and assent to it. We may (and should) believe that many men, teachings and even institutions are wiser than ourselves, but it is we who must make that act of belief, not they who must impose it upon us. Acceptance, if of wisdom, is a spiritual uplifting; imposition, whatever the wisdom, is spiritual violation, depriving a man of his birthright and the world of his potential unique contribution to its totality. Individual vision is the variant flower upon the stem of life ; to destroy it is to destroy the possibility of truth, but with no compensating certainty of destroying error, for not only may the imposed pattern be itself composed of error, but it *becomes* error in denying, by its dogmatic rigidity, what is the very essence of life—its flexibility.

It is theology and ecclesiasticism, not religion, which go hand in hand with dogmatism. Not religion itself perhaps, but the essential outward sign and attitude of religion, is that reverence which is prepared to seek truth everywhere and that humility which never fails to acknowledge, in the face of the

immensity and mystery of the universe, the possibility of error, or the possibility at least that truth for oneself may not be truth for all. The stake and the concentration camp, declarations of the claim to infallibility, are the surest signs of irreligion.

The applicability of all this to the social and political doctrines of contemporary Europe is, unhappily, only too clear. Nevertheless, some aspects must be specially considered.

The central problem of all government is the balance between personal freedom and social control, and by its solution of that problem a state must be judged. Turning to the doctrines in question, two are quite evidently completely and unequivocally authoritarian. Both Fascism and National Socialism seek the utmost limit of personal subordination to what they call the State but what in reality is—let us underline the point again—no more than that group of individuals who have *taken it upon themselves* to speak in the name of the State. Italian Fascism especially makes this identification of the State with the will and being of one single person: "Mussolini is always right." "One thing must be dear to you above all: the life of the Duce." And this man-state claims absolute limiting control over the individual. National Socialism admits the "specially clever individual" as the creative source, but in opposing this individual to "the mass" it, no less than Fascism, asserts its right to impose its mould on all save the aristocratic few who, however chosen, decide what the State shall be and say and do. In each case we have a pyramid of "authority downwards and responsibility upwards". The army is the pattern of all social life and war the supremely noble activity —war whose impulse is intolerance, whose method a crushing discipline and death, and whose aim the triumph of Might in total disregard of any Right.

Russian Communism is commonly placed among the dictatorships, and, it seems, rightly so. But its case is not quite identical, for its theory at least presumes a State which shall be absolutely and militaristically supreme (as under Stalin) only until it "withers away" to leave that ideal world one imagines most democrats also wish for—in effect a harmonious anarchism of free individuals living naturally at peace with one another. The paradox, at any rate for all who believe that the means must condition the end, is hard to swallow. The 1936 U.S.S.R. Constitution promises many "freedoms" on paper, but in practice the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" seems as authoritarian as either Nazism or Fascism. If it is less aggressive internationally, the reasons are economic and geographical rather than ideological; internally, and wherever its influence extends, it is as intolerant as any.

Catholicism may seem a different case. It even encourages individualism—up to a point, that is, and on the "civil" side. But in the things that really matter, the things of the spirit, it is as rigidly authoritarian as the rest. "The civil authority must not be subservient to the advantages of one or of a few,

for it was established for the common good of all", but it *must* on the other hand be subservient to the one or the few who speak in the name of the Catholic Church, for Catholicism specifically denounces the allegedly Godless state which "gives equal rights to all religions" and does not "prefer one religion to the rest". The state, that is, is "clearly bound" to "the public profession of religion", and "not such a religion as each may choose, but that one which God commands, and which by certain and undoubted marks is proved to be the only true one". Yield to the Church its "established rights" and politics may, within that limit, be what they will; refuse those "rights", and even revolution is not forbidden. Catholic freedom is different, it would seem, only in degree and not in kind from Fascist freedom. The final fault and failure is the same—the basically intolerant demand to impose a pattern, to set a limit to human (and therefore spiritual) variety and, together with that, growth.

But it is not only their final fault; it is also immediate, in that it forces them into conflict with each other, in sheer hatred and denial of each other's exclusive claims. Lacking a truly religious humility, an authentic reverence for the other manifestations of universal life which share this mortal planet with them, they cannot but itch to destroy all those who will not bow the head and bend the knee to them. All in common they deem tolerance a weakness when Truth is in question, not having the wit to see that tolerance is Truth's prerequisite.

Are the democracies then, some will ask, really any better? Not the democracies, perhaps, but Democracy, as a theory, certainly offers a wider hope. It knows no Church as such, and regards the State as, broadly speaking, hardly more than a necessary evil, a means of organisation for our social needs, but beyond that point potentially at least a dangerous tyrant. In practice Democracy has often and disastrously fallen short, and in essence for the same reason as these other doctrines—a failure in respect and reverence for other differing personalities and points of view, a willingness to destroy others for material gain—but the aim of its best teachers has always been to release life in its widest variety, to allow it the fullest organic growth, and not, Procrustes-like, to lop its reaching limbs perpetually to fit this narrow bed or that.

But the purpose of this article is not to argue for or against either Democracy or Fascism or any of these doctrines as such. It is not even to suggest that the abolition of one, the retention of another, is desirable for world welfare. One would rather—and this surely is a sound theosophical attitude—retain them all (since every doctrine strong enough to hold and compel even one nation must have much of positive good in it) purged only of their destroying intolerance, their antagonising cruelty, their anti-religious claims to infallibility. Given tolerance, the religious spirit of reverence, we need no longer desiderate mediæval Europe's long-lost "single and

universal conception of man, society and government"; while without tolerance, without reverence, the re-establishment of any such conception, whatever it might be, could mean but a new and larger tyranny. It is the quality, not the form, of human thought and feeling that really matters most.

GEOFFREY WEST

POLITICAL THOUGHT*

The growth of political thought during the twenty-five centuries through which it has developed in our European civilisation, exhibits many diverse aspects of governmental evolution based upon the usages of antiquity. Jacob Burckhardt, quoted on the first page of the book under review, (in the chapter on "The Greek Idea of the State") wrote: "We shall never be rid of antiquity unless or until we become barbarians again." And the principle implied by that statement has been the guide and holdfast of all the more stable governments of which we read in history. When it was temporarily rejected, as, most notably, in the first years of the French Revolution, the return to tradition inevitably followed as soon as the need for the establishment of law and order became urgent.

But as the methods of Government evolved to suit the ever-changing conditions, an increasing number of factors presented themselves to complicate the problem, most prominently those arising from the increase of population and the spread of learning. As a consequence, those laws that are the instruments of government were grafted on the original stock in such bewildering profusion that at times the stock became completely obscured. What that prime basis should be was put in its simplest form by Plato in the *Republic* when he wrote: —"It is most profitable that men should mutually agree neither to inflict injustice nor to suffer it." But in the modern State this mutual agreement has to be decided by an immensely complicated machinery, and upon the sensitiveness and efficiency of that machinery the good health of the State depends.

Now if we take this barest of statements and keep it in mind while reading this book, we shall find that in nine-tenths of it the fundamental principle of government is automatically overlaid by what might be called a system of agglutination. Considerable scholarship has been devoted to the condensation of essentials in describing the growth of Political Thought in ancient Greece and Rome, in the Middle Ages, in the Renaissance, and also in its relation to particular societies in France, Germany, Italy, America and Russia. All of this material may be read with great interest by

* *Political Thought.* By J. P. MAYER, in collaboration with R. H. S. CROSSMAN, P. KECSKEMETI, E. KOHN-BRAMSTEDT and C. J. S. SPRIGGE. With an introduction by R. H. TAWNEY. (J. M. Dent and Sons, London. 18*s.*)

the scholar or the politician, though whether or not the latter will as a result be better fitted to play his rôle, great or small, in the government of his country is open to question, because in this steady amassing of details our original principle becomes overlaid beyond all recognition.

Returning now to our test, we shall find that our reading has elucidated the means whereby the machinery above referred to has been improved and added to in the course of the past fifteen hundred years, arriving at the presentation of two main, and widely separate types, Totalitarianism and Democracy. Each of these is designed to perform the function whereby a government can give expression to "mutual agreement", in deciding that primary, but now often completely overlooked, condition of equal justice for members of the corporate body, and so can obey the will of the nation. In the first case, that will is expressed by a dictator who is presumed to have an overriding knowledge of what is best for the State and therefore for the members of it. In the second case there is an elaborate and for the most part an inefficient method of reference to the wishes of a majority, or government by consent. Both types are coming into ever greater disrepute.

The reason for the failure of the first type is self-evident, and the true substance of that reason may be found in a quotation from Leibnitz, who in the last half of the seventeenth century lived through conditions that have a curious resemblance to those obtaining at the present time. For he lived his best years between two great wars, the first having left the trail of desolation into which he was born, the second maturing and culminating before his death. He wrote:—

> By shameful submission men's minds will be progressively intimidated and crushed, till they become at last incapable of all feeling. Inured to ill-treatment and habituated to bear it patiently, they will end by regarding it as a fatality which they can do nothing but endure. All will go together down the broad high road to slavery.

The failure of the second type is due most notably to a financial system that precludes the possibility of any mutual agreement among the governed. Wherefore, by way of general summary, we are driven to conclude that civilisation has reached the point at which it must either find a new road or collapse—as so many earlier civilisations have done before it.

But in what direction will the new road lie? We may find a suggestion or two in Mr. Crossman's admirable contribution on "British Political Thought", in which he, almost alone among the contributors, dares to glance beyond scholarship and tradition. In writing of the English political thinkers from Hobbes to Bagehot, for example, he says:—

> Their philosophies differ profoundly, but they all agree in this—that acceptance of traditional forms is not enough, that government is only defensible if it can be justified in terms of human need.

And in his concluding paragraphs he urges the pressing need for undertaking "a radical analysis of the fundamental postulates of our society", ending with the statement: —

> For the first time for many hundreds of years this country is not only without a clear-cut philosophy, but in need

of one.

We need not stay there. The plain truth is that for the first time in the history of civilisation we are facing a great evolutionary crisis. It is not confined to Europe or to the Western hemisphere, but includes all humanity. The signs of its development are of comparatively recent date, and we need not look for them earlier than the last quarter of the eighteenth century. In the last fifty years, however, they have developed, and are still developing, at an ever-quickening speed. The chief indication of this evolutionary crisis, and the only one that concerns us here, is an extension of consciousness. The rationalists and the political thinkers who prefer to look no deeper than the surface will find their account of the process in the development of education and of intercommunication, the latter not only between individuals but also between nations. And there is no space in this article to deal with any other aspect of it. That one, alone, is serious enough.

For what it means is that the whole structure of political tradition founded on antiquity is under criticism by immense numbers of people who have only recently begun to recognise the nature of their chains. What will follow when this mass-thinking takes shape in mass-action throughout the civilised world, must be obvious even to the most conservative of politicians. We may find some kind of precedent in that year of European revolution 1848, but it is only the feeblest foreshadowing of the chaos to come. And there can be no remedy by any tinkering with or adaptation of the present machines of government. The dawn of the great leap forward in human evolution is already breaking. It will lead us through immense disasters to the new world that we of the older generation will never see.

J. D. BERESFORD

With the Swamis in America. By A Western Disciple. (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas. As. 12.)

These memoirs, dating from 1898, treat of contacts with several of the disciples of Ramakrishna, who went to the United States as teachers of Vedanta. The book is distinguished by its sincerity and simplicity, as well as by its spiritual perception and freedom from egotism—so rare in autobiographical works.

This Western disciple was initiated into the order of Brahmacharis by Swami Abhedananda in New York City, where he also met Swami Vivekananda. Some years later he joined a group of twelve disciples under the guidance of Swami Turiyananda, and assisted in the formation of the first Vedanta retreat in America—the Shanti Ashram in California. This achievement is described in interesting detail and helpful glimpses are given of the life and teachings of Swami Turiyananda.

E. H. BREWSTER

Spirit and Reality. By NICOLAS BERDYAEV. (Geoffrey Bles, London. 8*s.* 6*d.*)

In this book Professor Berdyaev expounds once again his conception of the purified spiritual life as a revelation of Divine humanity. No contemporary philosopher has concentrated as he has done upon the personal reality of truth. It is this which makes him something more than a philosopher in the Western sense of the word. In his opposition both to the mental abstraction and to the mechanised thing he shares in fact the vision of the artist. The "personal" of course, as he conceives it, is utterly distinct from the "individual". In realizing it the conflict set up by acquisitive individualism is resolved. Such personality is always transcending itself in community because it is creatively inspired and can only know itself in a creative relationship both with the divine source of its being and with a world of fellow-beings. For it every object becomes a subject not through being appropriated subjectively but through being experienced as an incarnation of spirit, which is in its essential nature subjective and inward. Similarly the conflict between a monastic and dualistic interpretation of the universe is resolved. The spiritual life is seen to be both dualistic and monastic, to be, in Professor Berdyaev's words, "an interaction, an agency of one upon another" in which the fact of difference is necessary to the realization of unity. To him the mystery of this divinely human relation is implicit in Christ's "Incarnation". But he admits that the Christian revelation is unrecognisable in historical Christianity which has in fact fallen into the very sin of false objectification which destroys the reality of incarnation. On the other hand from the few references he makes to it, he clearly considers the East to have been guilty of the opposite mode of the sin of depersonalization. He admits that Hindu thought has an original greatness of its own, but argues that in the spiritual monism which it embraced "the Ego loses its identity in the Absolute Self" and that consequently "there is no personal spirit in the Hindu spirituality; the personal is general rather than individual". Similarly he describes Buddhism as teaching "a total renunciation of being". Such statements corroborate his admission that Western understanding of Hindu philosophy and Oriental thought is imperfect, chiefly through a failure to examine what such concepts as the Absolute Self or the *Atman* really meant to Eastern thinkers or to distinguish between their different uses of the word "being". Yet the tendency of the East to lose true personality in its quest of the infinitely impersonal has perhaps been as marked as the West's bondage to finite individuality. And to that extent Professor Berdyaev's generalisation is justified. Whether or not, therefore, we share his belief that Christ embodied creative personality as no one before him had done, bringing the spirit home to the very heart of human experience, the mystery of incarnation as he conceives and expounds it is profoundly significant, is indeed the key by which alone mankind can issue from the prison of egoism, whether transcendental or mechanical, in which at present it is going mad. Among the attributes of spirit which he cites are "freedom, meaning, integrity, love, value, an orientation towards the highest Divine world and union with it".

These are all distinctively human attributes, yet in realizing them man at once is and passes beyond himself. And all are contained in the word "creativeness". In this creativeness "*nous*" and "*pneuma*", the rational and the elemental qualities of spirit, are harmonised, and not only is the ego transformed into a true self, but by the power of its inner truth it longs and labours to transform the determined, objective world into a free and creative one. All false efforts at reform, whether individual or social, all tyrannies or enslavements to the merely technical, are, as he shows, failures to realize and act out of the divine human centre. It is by this criterion that he evaluates asceticism and mysticism, that he examines the pro-

blems of evil and suffering, and condemns a bourgeois world as a despiritualised world and the petrified spirituality and ritualistic forms of conventional religion. And in a suggestive last chapter he conceives the nature of the new spirituality which will supersede the present decay of spirit long perverted to selfish human ends.

Whatever bears the symbolical imprint of inhumanity, whether it be a notion of God or a scheme of Communism, denies this new spirituality, in which all the powers and faculties of spirit are concentrated in the human heart. This is not in fact a new conception. It possessed the heart and mind of William Blake, and if it lies in the pure depths of the Christian revelation, it has been realized by mystics of other faiths.

No Western philosopher, however, has grasped its meaning more compellingly than Professor Berdyaev, who is a prophet as well as a philosopher. He has a vision of man reconciled with God, and although his thought is at times difficult or repetitive, his vision of a world redeemed through persons living by the light of creative imagination is an inspiration in this dark hour.

HUGH I'A. FAUSSET

Talks with Swami Vivekananda. (Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas.)

These reports of informal conversations with Ramakrishna's leading disciple, who died in 1902, now translated from the original Bengali, are as invigorating as a breeze from the sea. Reading them, it is easy to understand Swami Vivekananda's appeal to the West as well as to India. Here speaks a religious stalwart of deep and one-pointed devotion to his guru, who is at the same time a man of common sense and possessed of indomitable energy.

Swami Vivekananda has no patience with selfish aspirations and holds up the ideal of renunciation. "What is the good of that spiritual practice or realization which does not benefit others?" he demands. And again he declares, "I don't care for Mukti and all that....I am ready to undergo a hundred thousand rebirths to train up a single man." He is ever spurring his followers on to more intense efforts for the common weal. "It will not do merely to listen to great principles", he declares. "You must apply them in the practical field." The quotation, "Arise, awake!" is often on his lips.

> You have well-nigh thrown the country into ruin by crying, 'It is impossible.' 'It is impossible.' What cannot human effort achieve?

The Swami stresses the importance of the education of women and with characteristic vigour he attacks the evil of untouchability, which he calls "Don't-touchism", emphasising the solidarity of mankind.

> There is the one Brahman in all, in them and in me....Unless the blood circulates over the whole body, has any country risen at any time?

To Swami Vivekananda's mind, Western achievements in multiplying material comforts to the accompaniment of increased want and distress constitute no proof of civilisation. He puts forward a different criterion, one of which the world to-day stands in sore need: "The more advanced a society or nation is in spirituality, the more is that society or nation civilised."

Ph. D.

The Spirit of the Brush. Being the Outlook of Chinese Painters on Nature from Eastern Chin to Five Dynasties, A. D. 317-960. Translated by SHIO SAKANISHI, Ph.D. The Wisdom of the East Series. (John Murray, London. 3*s.* 6*d.*)

It is pleasant in days of violence and peril to come upon a little book about old Chinese painters. The Series to which Dr. Sakanishi's book belongs does not admit, unfortunately, of including illustrations; but his work, within its limits, could hardly be more fascinating. The author has assembled—and has admirably translated—a number of essays by old Chinese painters about Chinese painting, and so vivid are the word-pictures in these tiny essays that we can almost see the pictures which the artists had in mind. Dr. Sakanishi, admitting the difficulty of translating old and sometimes corrupt Chinese texts, has wisely done his best for us, leaving all disputation aside.

First, then, we get from these old Chinese painters much the same impression that we get from old Chinese poets: as, for instance, in Arthur Waley's translations and commentaries. They seem to have been men of simple tastes and little worldly ambition. True, there is Li Ch'êng (circa 960 A.D.) who "loved wine, music and chess", and who was reputed not to be able to paint until he had taken wine; but even of him we read that he cared nothing for official honours. By far the most attractive of these long-dead artists is, however, Tsung Ping (375-443 A.D.). Indeed, he was a fit companion for Mr. Waley's great discovery—the tender and charming poet Po-Chu-i.

"Tsung Ping", we read, "with his equally romantic wife, wandered about the mountains and rivers of Wu and Ch'u, and for some time lived in a cottage among the Hêng mountains. In his old age he returned (home) and lamented, 'Now I am old and infirm. I fear I shall no longer be able to roam among the beautiful mountains. Clarifying my mind, I meditate trails and wander about only in my dreams'." He also wrote "As I strum my lute, multitudinous mountains shall stir and echo my songs." Modern artists might profit if they would listen to his remark that "the truth comprises the impression received through the eyes and recognised by the mind". Finally, let us listen to what seem to be the last words of this gentle old mountain-lover. "And so", he said, "by living in leisure, by nourishing the spirit, by cleansing the wine-glass, by playing the lute, and *by contemplating in silence before taking up the brush to paint,* although remaining seated (a charming touch!), I travel to the four corners of the world, never resisting the influence of the heavens and for ever responding to the call of the wild, where the cliffs and peaks rise to soaring heights and the forests are shrouded in clouds that stretch as far as the eye can reach. The virtuous and wise men of ancient times come back to live in my imagination. All interesting things and their significance are revealed to me. What more should I desire? I wish only to nourish my spirit, and if my spirit is nourished, is it not better than anything else I could desire?"

In the principles of Wang Wei, who said, "In painting landscape, the idea should exist before the brush is taken up", we may catch something of the spirit which pervades old Chinese painting. He said, for instance, "Distant mountains cannot be linked to those which are near; distant water cannot be joined to that which is near. At the waist of the mountain, where it is sheltered, one may place temples and small huts. On the bluff or on the sloping banks, it is well to place a small bridge. Where there is a path, there should be trees and forests; where the river-bank comes to an end, there should be a deserted ferry-landing; where the water comes to an end, there should be trees shrouded in haze; where the water is broad, there are travelling sails, where there is a heavy growth of vegetation, there is a human habitation." Have we not, in these words, a Chinese painting?

Painting was regarded, we learn, as

an extension of calligraphy ; and the artist seems not to have been looked upon as a man who much differed from the ordinary man. It is also instructive to find that the earliest essayists lay stress upon the moral implications and the verisimilitude of a picture and, in particular, of a portrait. It is comforting, also, to come upon a writer of the ninth century A.D. who laments the decay of art.

There can be no doubt that if we can absorb the philosophy of the Tao we shall have a much better chance of appreciating old Chinese paintings. In a footnote to page 55 the author says : "This comes from the old Chinese concept that Heaven is the spirit, and hence the reality ; Earth is the form, and hence the appearance. The Universe is harmonious with these two elements acting against each other." He refers, presumably, to the idea that there is a fundamental duality in and throughout the universe, of which sex is merely one manifestation : that is to say, to the Pair of Opposites which the Japanese call "In" and "Yo" and the Chinese, I think, call "ying" and "yang".

CLIFFORD BAX

The Science of the Self. By BHAGAVAN DAS. (The Indian Book Shop, Benares. Rs. 1/8.)

Sir S. Radhakrishnan, in arranging for a series of writings on contemporary Indian Philosophy, invited the author of this book to contribute his convictions on the ultimate problems of Philosophy and the process of thought by which they were realized. Such is the origin of this work.

The title and sub-title—"(A Search for) The Science of the Self (in) the Principles of Vedanta-Yoga"—seem to us misleading. In so far as Yoga is a science, it is, according to Patanjali, the science of stilling the mind-stuff ; while the final realization of the Self, as Hinduism recognizes, comes only when He, the Self, chooses. In the words of the *Kena-Upanishad* :

> There goes neither the eye, nor speech, nor mind ; we know It not ; nor do we see how to teach one about It. Different It is from all that is known, and It is beyond the unknown as well ... he knows It not, who thinks it is comprehended by him. It is unknown to those who know and known to those who do not know.

Sir S. Radhakrishnan remarks in his *Indian Philosophy* :

> The truth of the Soul is an hypothesis so long as we are at the level of science.

The book begins with an autobiographical account and continues with an examination of world-weariness, world-sympathy and the unity and science of life. Reference is frequently made to "The Logion", the closing lines of a poem written by himself. He says of them that they enclose all such satisfaction, illusory or true, as he has been able to achieve. These lines are :

> Out of the storm rose calm the thought—
> I (am) This not, I (am) This not.

Several pages are devoted to their significance from which we select the following passage.

> ...a posing of the I : then a sup-posing, and im-posing upon it-Self, by the I, of an opposite of it-Self ; also an im-posing of it-Self upon that op-posite ; thus a composing of the two into one mind-body, psycho-physique ; then a deposing of that op-posite; and finally a re-posing, the re-pose, of it-Self in (*Své mahimni*) 'Its own pure ever-undisturbed Greatness', Its Peaceful Eternity and Infinity.

The last three of the seven chapters deal with cognition, desire and action, and contain valuable if familiar analyses which are compared in an interesting manner with long quotations from such Western writers as Bergson and McDougall. The author demonstrates convincingly the underlying principles of life as manifested in many forms. A strong appeal is made for the ancient Hindu sociological conceptions, which included that of the four castes.

The author has given us here what he has found most precious in his search for the truth.

E. H. BREWSTER

Becoming. By FRANK TOWNSHEND. (Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London. 6s.)

Among fiction-writers rarely is so little real imagination shown as in attempts to forecast the future. Because aeroplanes threaten our present civilisation, therefore 'Things to Come' must be more and more aerial. Because ectogenesis can be achieved with small rodents, 'Brave New World' inhabitants must all be bred in bottles. There is not much to choose between this kind of mind and that of the Generals who conceived the last war in terms of cavalry and may be preparing for the next on trench warfare lines. Mr. Townshend has at least avoided this banality in indicating—not in fictional form—the coming of his "urthman".

Instead of taking some apparently dominant feature of the passing age and extending a future in terms of that, he plainly recognises that in the future, as in the past, the eventual line of advance may prove to be through beings who now appear weaker than the majority of their contemporaries, though possessing gifts that eventually come to dominate when the age is ready for them. The progenitors of the coming race are already among us. "The urthman... came in the persons of founders of religions, sages, philosophers, poets and mystics." Mankind, or rather its dominant majority at present, "is the servant of time"; the urthman "lives in eternity". How, then, is this scattered band of *illuminati* to rise to power? The author is vague as to whether this is to be by the "open conspiracy" in the Wellsian manner, or in the more darkly conspiratorial mode of the Shavian "long-livers". Perhaps the latter, for he sees that the best when it occurs must be the enemy of the good; the urthman "may be assisting in the destruction of a type of being, right for its time, but for which becoming has no further need; the destruction of over-ambitious, over-calculating man... who has chosen the path of degeneration... Throughout evolution destruction has played a great and necessary rôle."

In quality this book is loose and discursive; general statements about the universe are made without either a sufficient survey of the facts or any attempt to combine them in a philosophical system. Nevertheless, it has interest as an essay along lines which "becoming" may well follow—the development among men generally of spiritual and, less importantly, "psychic" sides which, now that the evolution of the five senses has apparently ceased, seem to present obvious media of human advance.

ROSS NICHOLS

Death is not the End. By B. ABDY COLLINS. (G. Bell and Sons Ltd., London. 3s. 6d.)

No one will quarrel with the author's dictum that "the case for survival must be decided here and now by each man according to the dictates of sound common sense". That same common sense, however, refuses to subscribe to his further assertion that the case in question "rests on the great mass of evidence which has been recorded mainly in the last eighty years or so". None the less, the author has performed a most useful work of classification of evidence derived from an examination of the phenomena associated with Spiritualism, and has added instances within his own experience which lend value to the record. In these days of "accident and sudden death", his volume is bound to be widely read. It is regrettable that he has not included H. P. Blavatsky's works in the bibliography; her works still remain authoritative and comprehensive for those whose vision roams further afield than the last 80 years, and a slight perusal of them would have precluded the definition on p. 13 of the etheric body as "the vehicle of spirit, which is the divine principle of life and the centre of moral intuition in man". Survival after death is not necessarily equivalent to immortality as generally understood, and a more detailed analysis of man's nature is requisite for a proper under-

standing of the conditions applicable to any reasonable scheme of immortality of the human soul. The psychical researcher needs to remember that apparitions and phenomena antedate modern spiritualism, and that the problem of the identity of communicating and "materializing" entities requires research into the centuries-old testimony to the existence of the Astral Light.

It is hoped that a future volume in this useful series will be devoted to the special problem of mediumship and its exploitation in the interest of psychical research. It is customary to speak of "sitting for development", as if a medium possessed active powers and were not a passive agent, and little, if anything, is known of the nature and effects of mediumship upon the medium himself.

B. P. HOWELL

Rabindranath Tagore : His Personality and Work. By V. LESNY. Translated by GUY MCKEEVER PHILLIPS. (Allen and Unwin Ltd., London. 8*s.* 6*d.*)

Professor Lesny, an eminent Sanskrit scholar from the University of Prague, is well-qualified to write on the subject of Tagore's work and personality. He has had the singular advantage of considerable personal contact with the poet, having spent some time at Santiniketan. Moreover his intimate knowledge of Sanskrit helped him greatly in his study of Bengali, and he rapidly learnt to speak, read and write in that language. This proved a two-fold advantage; it enabled him to gain accurate information about Tagore from his intimate associates at Santiniketan; and, even more important, he has been able to study and interpret for foreign readers the immense volume of Tagore's works which have never been translated into English.

Professor Lesny begins his study with a clear and concise account of the religious and literary background of Bengal in the first half of the nineteenth century. The various reformist religious movements and their influence on the young Tagore are dealt with in some detail. Against this background the author then traces the development of Tagore's personality and genius through youth and maturity by various stages to the autumn of his life. His method has been to consider the different aspects of the poet's many-sided genius side by side. Thus alongside valuable descriptions of Tagore's poetry, drama and novels, we are given a picture of his interventions on the political scene, of his travels, and of his practical efforts to inculcate his ideals for the people of India. Particularly interesting is the description of the successful experiment at Santiniketan, which is treated with great sympathy and insight.

It might be deduced that the author's attitude towards his subject was one of uncritical adoration. Let it be said that Prof. Lesny's study, though obviously inspired by affection and respect, is, with the limitations consequent upon such a relationship, free from bias. The mighty genius of Tagore makes him a figure of national and international importance, and Prof. Lesny has succeeded in portraying and interpreting this genius in its many forms. This book will delight those who already know and admire the poet's works, while those for whom it is only a beginning will surely be inspired to a closer and deeper study. A word of praise should be added for the uniform excellence of the English translation.

B. J. S.

ENDS AND SAYINGS

The world is becoming divided into two conflicting ideological camps which many be described in general terms as Democratic and Authoritarian. Men live from day to day in a state of almost intolerable tension, while all their constructive and creative instincts are rapidly being requisitioned for the destructive end of War. Mankind has always been divided by its creeds, political or religious, but never before has there been such a marked cleavage between different sections of the human race.

Why has the world failed so completely to achieve any stabilised order? Why have creeds of such violence and ferocity gripped the imaginations of great nations and made them a menace to the peace of the world? An answer to these questions is essayed in two articles we publish in this issue. Mr. J. D. Beresford examines the fundamental concepts of political thought, while Mr. Geoffrey West discusses the various social and political doctrines of contemporary Europe. Both these articles hold much of interest for the thoughtful reader who wishes to trace the reasons underlying the rapid developments of the present. Mr. Geoffrey West does not include in his survey the method of *Satyagraha* or the way of Truth and Non-violence which has been successful to some extent in India, and which has gained many admiring followers in the Occident.

Mr. Beresford quotes Plato in his exposition of the prime basis for a government. "It is most profitable that men should mutually agree neither to inflict injustice nor to suffer it." In the light of this statement we see that almost without exception the present systems of government are sadly lacking. We tend to be so indignant at the terrible injustices that exist in the aggressor states that we forget that they are not the only offenders. It is easy to ignore the fact that we too need to put our house in order. Such creeds as Fascism would never have gained such immense power if the nations who adopted them had not been disillusioned and despairing. It is foolish to believe that they can only be combated by force of arms. The most potent weapons that can be used against them are righteousness and justice. The rest of the world should look first to themselves and make sure that their system of government is surely based on justice. We have to free ourselves from the many false concepts which we have acquired in the course of centuries and go back to first principles. Pure thinking will lead naturally to right action, and just principles will in the end prevail against power that is based only on injustice, fear and armed might.